Strengthening post-authoritarian democracy, 1986-2001: The political impulses and interventions of the Philippine Catholic Church.

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STRENGTHENING POST-AUTHORITARIAN DEMOCRACY, 1986-2001: THE POLITICAL IMPULSES AND INTERVENTIONS OF THE PHILIPPINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

Theorising the relationship between the Church and democracy is at once an ancient and yet new proposition. Very recently, there has been a decline in interest in the post-authoritarian period owing to various changing endogenous and exogenous factors that have affected the Church's political engagement in a democratic setting. While it has been suggested that the Church in many instances has politically demobilised in the post-authoritarian era, the Philippine experience continues to witness a church engaged in issues affecting democratisation. This study examines the capacity of the Church as an actor in strengthening democracy in the post-transition period using the Philippine Catholic Church experience and cases of the Diocese of Malaybalay and the Diocese of Bacolod. While both dioceses (local churches) are not typical representatives of the Philippine Catholic Church, they do provide some insights into the complexity of the Church as an actor in democratisation. Both were actively involved during the authoritarian period. But beyond that, both experienced similar and divergent political processes and yielded different outcomes. Three arguments are proposed to explain the Church's capacity and role in democracy building. Firstly, hierarchy-laity interaction (church *ad intra*) creates and enhances a climate of participation as both leaders and members interact, define and pursue organisational goals. Secondly, church-civil society nexus (church *ad extra*) sets new modes of positive interaction (animation, mobilisation and creative partnership) between church and civil society, widens the avenue of participation, and increases mobilisational resource in building democracy. Church *ad intra* and *ad extra* are closely connected, and they are crucial conditions for appreciating the Church's capacity as an actor in democracy. Thirdly, engaged citizenship appears to be the single most important contribution of the church in post-authoritarian democracy building. The creation of an environmental constituency (in the Diocese of Malaybalay), and the formation of a peace movement (in the Diocese of Bacolod) made possible a new understanding and practice of citizenship. Citizenship engages both the State and society through electoral politics, interest articulation and representation, commitment to the rule of law, human rights advocacy, cultivation of a democratic culture and the promotion of good governance. Lessons from these cases have repercussions not only for other churches but also for civil society actors who profess to be protagonists in the democratic enterprise.

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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ACRONYMS

ABB	Alex Boncayao Brigade
ACCESS	Alliance of Concerned Citizens for Empowered Social System
AFFLA	Agro-Forestry Farm Lease Agreement
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AKK	*Ang Kristiyanong Katilingban* (The Christian Community)
AKKAPKA	(*Aksyon sa Kapayapaan at Katarungan*, Action for Peace and Justice)
AMRSP	Association of Major Religious in the Philippines
AMRSMP	Association of Major Religious of Men in the Philippines
AMRSWP	Association of Major Religious of Women in the Philippines
ANP	Alliance of New Politics
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARMM	Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
ASSO	Arrest and Seizure Order
ATOM	August Twenty-One Movement
BAIDA	Bukidnon Agro Industrial Association
BANDILA	*Bansang Nagkaisa sa Diwa at Layunin* (United nation in spirit and purpose)
BAYAN	*Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (New Nationalist Alliance)
BBC	Bishops-Business Conference
BCC	Basic Christian Community
BCC-CO	Basic Christian Community Community Organising
BEC	Basic Ecclesial Community
BFI	Bukidnon Forest Incorporation
BIC	Bukidnon Institute of Catechetics
BIND	Broad Initiative for Negros Development
BISIG	*Bukluran para sa Ika-uunlad ng Sosyalism sa Isip at Gawa* (Unity for the Progress of Socialism in Theory and Practice)
BUACS	Bukidnon Association of Catholic Schools
BUF	Bishops-Ulama Forum
BUSCO	Bukidnon Sugar Corporation
CAA	Community Aid Abroad
CADC	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim
CAFGU	Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units
CALL	Coalition Against Logging in Lanao
CAP	Catholic Action of the Philippines
CARL	Comprehensive Agrarian Land Reform
CARP	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program
CBCP	Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
CCA	Caridad Cabahug-Almendras
CDP	Catholic Directory of the Philippines
CEAP	Catholic Education Association of the Philippines
CEB	*Comunidades Eclesiales de Base* (Basic Christian Communities)
CENRO	Community Environment and Natural Resources
CfC	Couples for Christ
CFM	Christian Family Movement
Cha-Cha	Charter Change

CHDF	Civilian Home Defence Forces
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
CHICKS	Candoni, Hinoba-an, Ilog, Cauayan, Kabankalan, Sipalay
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CLAO	Citizen Legal Assistance Office
CLO	Congress of Labour Organizations
CLP	Council of the Laity of the Philippines
CMND	Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily
CMLC	Church-Military Liaison Committee
CNL	Christians for National Liberation
CO	Community Organising
CODE-NGO	Caucus of Development NGO Networks
COMELEC	Commission on Elections
CONCORD	Constitutional Correction for Development
COPA	Council of Philippine Affairs
COPE	Community Organization of the Philippine Enterprise
CORD	Coalition for the Restoration of Democracy
CPDF	Cordillera People's Democratic Front
CPLA	Cordillera People's Liberation Army
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CRC	Center for Research and Communications
CRCC	Cordillera Regional Consultative Commission
CSM	Christian Socialism Movement
CWL	Catholic Women's League
CWO	Catholic Welfare Organization
DAR	Department of Agrarian Reform
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DMDC	Dynasty Management Development Corporation
DPA	Diocesan Pastoral Assembly
DPC	Diocesan Pastoral Congress
DPCC	Diocesan Pastoral Coordinating Council
DPCP	Diocesan Pastoral Congress for Priests
DPWH	Department of Public Works and Highways
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
EDSA	Epifanio de los Santos Avenue
ERD	Environment Research and Division
FBIS	Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FFF	Federation of Free Farmers
FFW	Federation of Free Workers
FLAG	Free Legal Action Group
FLGLA	Forest Land and Grazing Lease Agreement
GKK	*Gamay'ng Kristiyanong Katilingban* (Basic Christian Community)
GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
GSK	*Gamay'ng Simbahanong Katilingban* (Basic Ecclesial Community)
IBP	Integrated Bar of the Philippines
ICSI	Institute on Church and Social Issues
INC	*Iglesia ni Cristo* (Church of Christ)
IP	Indigenous People

IPA	Indigenous People's Apostolate
IPRA	Indigenous People's Rights Act
ISO	Institute of Social Order
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme
JAJA	Justice for Aquino, Justice for All
KASAPI	*Kapulungan ng mga Sandigan ng Pilipinas*, (Assembly of People for whom the Philippines rely)
KKK	*Kristiano Kontra Komunismo* (Christians Against Communism)
KKP	*Kilusang Kristiyano ng Kabataang* Pilipino (Christian Movement of the Filipino Youth)
KKRP	*Kilusang Khi Rho ng Pilipinas* (Khi Rho Movement of the Philippines)
KoC	Knights of Columbus
KOMPIL	*Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino* (Congress of Filipino Citizens)
KMU	*Kilusan ng Mayo Uno* (May One Movement)
KPPSK	*Kapunungan sa Pagpanalipod ug Pagpalambo sa Kinaiyahan* (Organization for the Protection and Development of the Environment)
LAB	Legal Aid Bureau
Lakas-NUCD	Power - National Union of Christian Democrats
LAMMP	Laban ng Makabayang Masang Pilipino (Struggle of the Nationalist Filipino Masses)
LAO	Legal Aid Office
LAPVIIR	Laymen's Association for Post-Vatican II Reforms
LCHR	Lawyers Committee for Human Rights
LOMAS	Lay Organizations, Movements and Associations
LRC	Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center
LTK	*Lingkod-Tao Kalikasan* (Servant-Person Nature)
LUSSA	Luzon Secretariat for Social Action
MAPALAD	*Mapadayonong Panaghiusa sa Lumad Alang sa Damlag* (Progressive Unity of Natives for the Future)
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MIN	Movement for Independent Negros
MIPC	Mindanao Interfaith People's Conference
MISSSA	Mindanao-Sulu Secretariat for Social Action
MM	Maryknoll Missionary
MMWDP	Muleta-Manupali Watershed Development Project
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MSPA	Multi-Sectoral Peace Advocates
MSPC	Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference
NAJFD	Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy
NAKASAKA	*Nagkahiusang Katawhan Alang sa Kalinaw* (People United for Peace)
NAMFREL	National Movement for Free Election
NAPC	National Anti-Poverty Commission
NAPOCOR	National Power Corporation
NASAGA	National Social Action General Assembly
NASSA	National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace
NASUTRA	National Sugar Trading Corporation

NATRILUBU	*Nagkahiusang Tribo sa Lumad sa Bukidnon* (United Tribes of Natives in Bukidnon)
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NCC	National Ceasefire Committee
NCCP	National Council of Church of the Philippines
NCPMC	National Citizens' Peace Monitoring Council
NDF	National Democratic Front
NEDA	National Economic Development Authority
NFSW	National Federation of Sugar Workers
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NIC	Newly Industrialising Country
NKSSF	*Nagpakabanang Katawhan sa San Fernando* (Concerned People of San Fernando)
NO-ERAP	Negros Occidental - Expel Remove Actor President
NPA	New People's Army
NPC	National Peace Conference
NPF	National Peace Forum
NPCCR	National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal
NQSRMDC	Norberto Quisumbing Senior Management and Development Corporation
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National Security State
NUC	National Unification Commission
OCD	Order of Discalced Carmelite
OFM	Order of Friars Minor
OIC	Organization of Islamic Conference
OMI	Oblates of Mary Immaculate
OQC	Operation Quick Count
PACC	Presidential Anti-Crime Commission
PAFID	Philippine Association for Intercultural Development
PAHRD	Partnership for Human Rights and Development
PANLIPI	Para-Legal *Alay sa Katutubong Filipino* (Quasi-legal Service for the Indigenous Filipino)
PAO	Public Attorney's Office
PARE	People's Alliance to Remove Erap
PARFUND	Philippine Agrarian Reform Foundation for National Development
PC	Philippine Constabulary
PCCR	Preparatory Commission on Constitutional Reforms
PCGG	Presidential Commission on Good Governance
PCIJ	Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
PCO	Presidential Commitment Order
PCP-II	Second Plenary Council of the Philippines
PCPR	Promotion of Church People's Response
PCSO	Philippine Charity Sweepstake Office
PD	Presidential Decree
PDA	Presidential Detention Action
PEACE	People's Alliance for Change
PENRO	Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office
PENTECOST	People's Power for Enlightenment and Commitment for Sovereignty and Truth

PEZAN	Peace Zone Advocates in Negros
PIC	Philippine Independent Church
PIME	*Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere* (Pontifical Institute for Foreign Mission)
PIRMA	People's Initiative for Reforms, Modernisation and Action
PDI	Philippine Daily Inquirer
PHILSUCOM	Philippine Sugar Commission
PISA	Priests Institute of Social Action
PnB	*Partido ng Bayan* (Party of the People)
PNB	Philippine National Bank
PNP	Philippine National Police
PO	People's Organization
PPCRV	Pastoral Parish Council for Responsible Voting
PPDO-B	Provincial Planning and Development Office - Bukidnon
PPDO-NO	Provincial Planning and Development Office – Negros Occidental
PPMC	Peace Promotion and Monitoring Council
PROMDI	Progressive Movement of Devolution of Initiatives
PSK	*Pagbugtaw sa Kamatuoran* (Awakening to the Truth)
PsPN	*Paghiliusa sa Paghidaet – Negros* (Unity for Peace)
PSTFAD	Philippine Special Task Force on Ancestral Domain
QUEMTRAS	Quezon Manobo Tribes Association
RAs	Reaffirmists
RAM	Reform Armed Forces of the Philippines Movement
RGS	Religious of the Good Shepherd
RIO	Resign-Impeach-Oust
RJs	Rejectionists
RSB	Religious Sisters of Bukidnon
RTC	Regional Trial Court
RMT	Redemptorist Mission Team
RPA	Revolutionary Proletarian Army
RPM-P	*Rebolusyonaryong Partido Manggagawa – Pilipinas* (Revolutionary Workers Party – Philippines)
SAC	Social Action Center
SCAPS	Share and Care Apostolates for Poor Settlers
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SEM-NET	Seminarians' National Network for Free Elections
SFIC	Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
SFP	Soldiers of the Filipino People
SJ	Society of Jesus
SLB	*Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan* (Servant-Church of the People)
SPC	Society of St. Paul Chartres
SPCPD	Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development
SRA	Social Reform Agenda
SSC	Society of Saint Columban
SSD-B	Sun Star Daily - Bacolod
SUHITRA	Suminao Higa-onon Tribal Association
SWS	Social Weather Station
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TFA	Tribal Filipino Apostolate
TFD	Task Force Detainees

TFM	Task Force Macajalar
TIPI	Timber Industries of the Philippines Incorporated
TLA	Timber License Agreement
TMC	The Manila Chronicle
TRO	Temporary Restraining Order
TVDS	The Visayan Daily Star
UCCP	United Church of Christ of the Philippines
UDHA	Urban Development and Housing Act
ULP	Ulama League of the Philippines
ULR-TF	Urban Land Reform – Task Force
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nationalist Democratic Organization
UST	University of Santo Tomas
VACC	Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption
VFA	Visiting Forces Agreement
VOTE-CARE	Voters Organization, Training and Education toward Clear, Authentic, Responsible Voting
YCSP	Young Christian Socialists of the Philippines
YOU	Young Officers' Union

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Chapter one

Introductory remarks: the Church, civil society and democracy

> *On my arrival in the United States the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention; the longer I stayed there, the more I perceived the great political consequences resulting from this new state of things. In France I had almost always seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom marching in opposite directions. But in America I found they were intimately united and that they reigned in common over the same country.* --Alexis de Tocqueville[1]

Democracy is good for development. Democracy and development go together and by no means compete with each other. Although this claim is not uncontested, it is a widely accepted premise in democratic and development studies.[2] Nonetheless, democracy, like development, is not simply structurally driven. Democracy needs actors for its initiation and sustainability. A conventional idea in democratic studies suggests that the Church is a key actor in democratisation.[3] Just how and why this happens is more complex and less understood than political theorists and activists would have us believe. The Church is a complex actor with a plurality of forces within its domain and a whole range of power relations and interests that are often disparate. Further, the concept of democratisation does not limit itself to democratic transition after a regime change but extends well into the *quality* of democracy: its survivability, sustainability, vibrancy, and deepening.

This thesis proposes to address the following key questions: does the church contribute in strengthening the quality of Philippine democracy? If so, in what ways? To what extent? What are the possibilities and limits of its roles in democratisation? While mindful that the Church may produce undemocratic political outcomes, it is argued that despite its limitations, the Philippine Church has the potential to strengthen democracy beyond the transition. This research will focus on the years following the collapse of the authoritarian regime of President

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[1] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*. The Henry Reeve text as revised by Francis Bowen and further edited by Phillips Bradley. Vol. I, (New York: Knopf, 1980), 308.
[2] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002: deepening democracy in a fragmented world* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[3] William H. Swatos, Jr., ed., *Religion and democracy in Latin America* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1995); Jeffrey Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships and democracy in Latin America* (New York: Orbis Books, 1998).

Ferdinand E. Marcos in 1986, namely, during the administrations of President Corazon C. Aquino (1986-1992), President Fidel V. Ramos (1992-1998), and finally President Joseph E. Estrada (1998-2001).

This first chapter locates the changes within the Catholic Church after Vatican II and clarifies key concepts in the research. The second reviews the body of literature in the hope of building a theoretical framework explaining the relationship between the Church and democracy. The third situates the Philippine Catholic Church during the authoritarian period (1972-1986) and describes the various lines of involvement it played. The fourth looks at its roles in post-authoritarian Philippines insofar as democracy building is concerned. The fifth tells the story of the Diocese of Malaybalay and examines its strengths and limits in democracy building. The sixth investigates the various paths of political processes and outcomes of the Diocese of Bacolod and compares these with those of the Diocese of Malaybalay. The final chapter concludes the study.

1.1 Research interest and scope

This research attempts to shed light on the complexity surrounding the Church's contributions to the process of democratisation. The idea linking the Church, more particularly the Roman Catholic Church, and democracy can be traced back to the days of Alexis de Tocqueville. In 1830s, he was greatly fascinated by the positive correlation between the two in America, quite unlike his experience in France.[4] This interest has largely receded from academic discourse since his time, with the possible exception of French philosopher Jacques Maritain's attempt to revive such thinking in 1940s.[5] Over the years, the Church's contributions to democracy have been ignored, but in the recent past, they were equally overstated. In 1959, C. Wright Mills once declared that 'Neither preachers nor the religious laity matter, (they could) be readily agreed with

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[4] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, I, 308.
[5] Jacques Maritain, *Christianity and democracy*, Doris C. Anson, trans. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986).

and safely ignored.'[6] This thinking has dominated the literature on religion and politics, some strands of Protestantism excepting, until the mid-1960s. In particular, Catholicism, after Max Weber's classic thesis concerning the positive relationship between Protestant ethic and capitalism, was held suspect and deemed incompatible with capitalism and the whole project of democratisation. Weber asserts that particular variants of Protestantism (e.g., Calvinism, Pietism, Methodism and Baptist sects), driven by a spirituality of worldly asceticism and an ethos of personal responsibility and freedom, provide religious motivation for rational organisation and use of wealth (capitalism).[7] For Weber, the 'other worldliness of Catholicism' made Catholics less 'engaged in capitalistic enterprise.'[8] Thus by implication, Catholicism was not a positive factor for political democracy. This thinking became an influential discourse connecting religion and democracy. For years then, the Weberian thesis rendered Roman Catholicism suspect as a potential religious ally of democracy.[9]

Nonetheless, the relationship between Catholicism and democracy has once again gained currency. Many political analysts cite the celebration of the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council (Vatican II) from 1962 to 1965 as the pivotal point of the Church's public engagement in the modern world.[10] The pre-Vatican II Church saw itself ecclesiologically as a 'perfect society' above and disengaged from the world.[11] It saw its mission primarily in the salvation of souls with minimal involvement in the secular and public affairs. The pre-Vatican II Church was generally dominated by the ordained ministers (bishops and priests) with very little, if any, lay

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[6] C. Wright Mills, *The Causes of world war three* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1959), 150, cited in Jeff Haynes, *Religion in the third world: issues in the third world politics* (Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1993), 1.
[7] Max Weber, *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*, Talcott Parsons, trans., (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1930).
[8] Ibid., 38.
[9] David Beetham, 'Conditions for democratic consolidation,' *Review of African Political Economy* 67 (1994), 168.
[10] Dermot Keogh, ed., *Church and politics in Latin America* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1990); José Casanova, *Public religions in the modern world* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[11] John Wilkins, 'How Vatican II changed the Church I: Earthquake in Rome,' *The Tablet* 12 October 2002, 10.

participation. European theology, more particularly Roman theology, was the dominant theological discourse and practice in the pre-Vatican II Church. Local theologies tended to be stifled, even anathematised. In this way, the Church was shielded from addressing questions and issues confronting the secular world. But there have been attempts to come to terms with the political order since the time of Pope Leo XIII in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[12]

Vatican II marks a radical change for the Roman Catholic Church in that it moved its vision beyond the private sphere to the public arena.[13] Two central Vatican II documents clarify the Church's relationship to the State and society: 'The Declaration on Religious Liberty' (*Dignitatis Humanae* - Of Human Dignity) and 'The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World' (*Gaudium et Spes* - Joy and Hope).[14] *Dignitatis Humanae* endorses religious pluralism with the declaration of the right of free expression of religious convictions. This is a significant step affirming the protection of individuals from religious coercion and theocracy. Religious pluralism is a vital ingredient in a democratic polity as this provides a good theological basis for separating church and state powers. *Gaudium et Spes* clarifies the identity of the Church as it engages in the modern world. It further states: 'The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well.'[15] Indeed Vatican II formally broke the divide that sheltered the Church from the everyday realities experienced by its people.

Although Vatican II did not expressly link the Church and democracy, it laid the theological foundation for that connection. Regional and national reinterpretations of the

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[12] J. Bryan Hehir, 'Catholicism and democracy: conflict, change, and collaboration,' in *Christianity and democracy in global context*, John Witte, Jr., ed., (Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westerview Press, 1993), 15-30.
[13] José Casanova, *Public religions in the modern world* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[14] Hehir, 'Catholicism and democracy...,' 21.
[15] Austin Flannery, ed. *Vatican Council II: the conciliar and post conciliar documents* Vol. I, (Dublin?: Pillar Books and Costello Publishing, 1975), 903.

universal principles laid out in Vatican II subsequently spelled out more specifically their relationship. Foremost among the regional re-appropriations of the Vatican II was the Latin American Conference in Medellin, Columbia in 1968, which saw the birth of liberation theology and the *Comunidades Eclesiales de Base* (CEBs). In the Philippine context, CEBs are known as the Basic Christian Communities (BCCs) and their later variant, the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs). BCCs mainstreamed lay participation in the Church and thus democratised to some extent its hierarchical structure.

The Papal social teaching from *Rerum Novarum* (Condition of Labour) to *Centisimus Annus* (On one hundredth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*)[16] along with Vatican II paved the way for expanding Christian moral imperatives to include engagement in public affairs particularly those that involved the promotion of human dignity, social justice, and total human development. The 1971 Synod of Bishops document *Justice in the World* strongly endorsed social justice as an essential component of evangelisation:

> Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.[17]

The *aggiornamento* (the updating of the Church identity and mission) set out by Vatican II fuelled the trajectory of the regional and local Church's role in promoting the common good, and by extension of democracy as well. Nevertheless, the changes within the Catholic Church in the wake of Vatican II were uneven. Despite Vatican II's intent to reform the universal Church and its mission, ecclesiological cleavages and contentious interpretations of church teaching with regard to social justice and political involvement continue to operate.

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[16] *Rerum Novarum* (literally means 'Of new things') was written by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 while Centesimus Annus (meaning 'The hundredth year') was authored by Pope John Paul II in 1991. The Latin titles of Papal encyclicals and other church documents are derived from the opening words of the document.

[17] 'Justice in the world,' in Austin Flanner, ed., *Vatican Council II*, Vatican Collection Vol., 2 (Leonminster, Herefords: Fowler-Wright Books, Ltd., 1982), 696.

While it is widely held that many local Catholic Churches were a vital religio-political actor in resisting authoritarian and military regimes in Latin America's *abertura* (political liberalisation) (1970s and 1980s) and in Africa (1990s), in South Korea (1970s and 1980s), in the Philippines (1986), and in the communist states in Central and Eastern European countries in the 1989 revolutions, [18] it needs to be demonstrated whether or not they equally make significant contributions to democracy building beyond the authoritarian period. The post-authoritarian period triggers and raises new issues that the Church must likewise address. In an increasingly pluralist society where the Church is no longer the primary voice of the voiceless in many Latin American countries, the lines of political engagement have changed markedly.[19] Given these emerging trends and the structural demands of the post-authoritarian period, democracy building becomes much more complex and fluid than the transition to democracy. On this point, David Beetham correctly maintains: 'democracy is much easier to inaugurate than it is to consolidate, much easier to establish than to maintain.'[20] Thus the Churches in the post-authoritarian and post-communist settings are struggling to redefine their identity and political niche in a newly found democratic space. Subsequently, many, particularly the progressive sectors in the Church, have become politically disengaged.[21]

The narrative of the Philippine Church shares much of the experience of the Latin American Churches in terms of its colonial history, dominance of Catholicism as the religion of

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[18] Swatos, *Religion and democracy in Latin America*; Paul Gifford, ed., *The Christian Churches and democratisation of Africa* (Leidon, New York and Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995); Mary L. Gautier, 'Church elites and the restoration of civil society in the communist societies in Central Europe,' *Journal of Church and State* 40(2), (Spring 1998), 298-317.

[19] Hannah Stewart-Gambino, 'Introduction: new games, new rules,' in *Conflict and competition: the Latin American Church in a changing environment*, Edward L. Cleary and Hannah Stewart-Gambino, eds., (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 1-19.

[20] David Beetham, 'Problems of democratic consolidation,' in *The Christian Churches and the democratisation of Africa*, Paul Gifford, ed., (Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995), 61.

[21] Scott Mainwaring, 'Democratisation, socio-economic disintegration, and the Latin American Churches after Puebla,' in *Born of the poor: the Latin American Church since Medellin*, Edward Cleary, ed., (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990); Carol Ann Drogus, 'The Rise and decline of liberation theology: Churches, faith and political change in Latin America,' *Comparative Politics* 27(4), (1995), 465-475; Tristan Anne Borer, *Challenging the State: Churches as political actors in South Africa 1980-1994* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998).

the establishment, American geo-political interests and adherence to the bureaucratic authoritarian ideology from 1972 to 1986. Like many Latin American Churches, the Philippine Church was a key protagonist in the struggle against authoritarianism and underdevelopment. Like many Latin American Churches in the post-authoritarian period, the Philippine Church struggled to redefine its role and position vis-à-vis civil society and the State. This makes the Latin American literature appear closer to the experience of the Philippine Church than that of Africa, Eastern and Central Europe and parts of Asia. However, unlike many of the Latin American Churches in the post-authoritarian period, the Philippine Church remains politically engaged, influential, and a prominent protagonist in the civil society movement, particularly in its creative engagement in citizenship advocacy. This makes the study of the Philippine Church and democratisation topical and timely.

Three main arguments are proposed in this thesis. Firstly, Church *ad intra* (internal organisational interaction between leaders and members) enhances the internal mechanism of participation and encourages productive hierarchy-laity interaction, thereby increasing the Church's potential as an actor in democracy building. Secondly, Church *ad extra* (Church's involvement with civil society organisations) widens the avenue of participation and provides a climate favourable to the democratisation of state and society. Thirdly, the single most significant contribution of the Philippine Church to democracy building lies in citizenship formation and advocacy.

1.2 Clarification of concepts

Four key concepts in this study need clarification: the Church, civil society, democracy, and citizenship. The definitions employed here are useful to the extent that they clarify the concepts pertinent to this study, but they do admit of some conceptual limits.

1.2.1 The Church

It is important to distinguish 'institutions' and 'organisations' (often used interchangeably in the literature) to better appreciate conceptually the Church. Following Douglass North, institutions are formal and informal established rules (e.g., laws, customary norms) that regulate human interaction.[22] In his analogical view, institutions are likened to rules that define a game in society, while organisations with a set of objectives and strategies are players. Both govern human activity and behaviour. Both interact with and shape each other, but analytically both can be differentiated as rules and players in a game.[23] Institutions generally stem from provisional arrangements becoming habitual practices before they become established having been passed on from generation to generation.[24] The doctrines, moral norms and laws in Roman Catholicism (or any Christian confession) are in this sense institutions since they structure the creed, conduct, and cultic worship of believers. Although the Church also has an internal structure governing a body of Christian believers, for the purposes of this study, it is a religious organisation[25] inasmuch as it follows, fashions, and interacts with ecclesial rules, generates symbols of religious identity, and devises its objectives and strategies. The Roman Catholic Church in its totality (or simply 'the Church' including its organisations and establishments), owing to its vast and complex structure encompassing local, subnational, national and international (beyond the state) spheres, is arguably a supra-state religious organisation. Between the smallest ecclesial unit in a village and the Vatican leadership are a plethora of actors, that is, associations, religious movements, communities, parishes and other ecclesiastical groupings that can collectively decide and act. Nonetheless, historically until recent times, in many Catholic countries (including the Philippines), the Church and State have been closely associated with each other,

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[22] Douglass C. North, *Institutions, institutional change and economic performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 4.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 83-84.
[25] I use 'organisation' to distinguish the Church in its entirety from its organisations which in this context includes all its organised actors (e.g., associations, movements, communities).

although this arrangement did not prevent some church leaders to criticise the State. Thus the Church as a supra-state religious organisation is distinct from civil society, but its organisations are civil society actors inasmuch as they are relatively autonomous, organised and they operate within the public sphere, the space between the State and households. This overlap blurs the distinction between the Church and civil society.

Although this study focuses on the Roman Catholic Church, it does refer to mainline Protestant Churches and other Christian denominations when pertinent. It deals with the Philippine Catholic Church (national in scope) and two of its local Churches. In the Catholic Church Code of Canon Law, the local (or particular) Church principally refers to a diocese or its equivalent.[26] The unity of all the local Churches is preserved by the Church of Rome, headed by the Roman Pontiff. The organogram of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines does not seek to depict accurately the Church's complexities, but it does give an idea of the structure of the Church (see Figure 1 next page). Although juridically self-contained, the local Churches (dioceses or their equivalents) are linked to the ecclesiastical province[27] (a group of nearby dioceses and their equivalents). At the ecclesiastical province level, a Metropolitan archbishop normally has special functions and powers within the province. The bishops of these local Churches have their own regional (e.g., the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference, MSPC) and national organisations (e.g., the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, CBCP). There are other national organisations such as the Association of Major Religious Superiors (AMRSP) and its members belong to local Churches, but juridically under their own respective religious superiors. The local Churches contain parishes, associations, chaplaincies, institutes, diocesan congregations, chapels, chapel-based movements (e.g., BECs), groups and other organisations.

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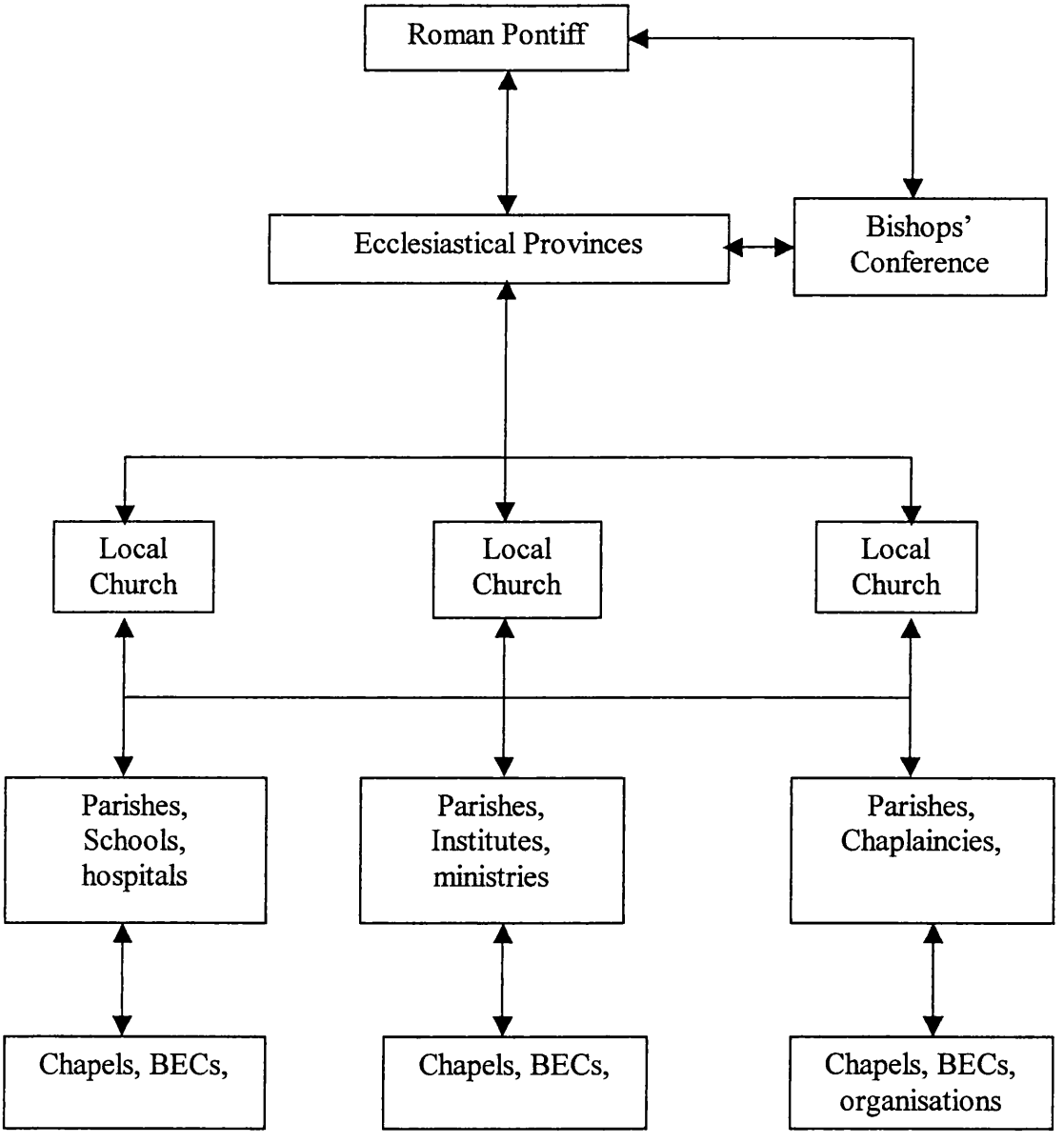
[26] The local Churches may also exist in the form of a 'territorial prelature, territorial abbacy, a vicariate apostolic, a prefecture apostolic and a permanently established apostolic administration.' See *The Code of Canon Law* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 84.
[27] Ibid., 99-100.

A local Church is generally divided into geographical districts, vicariates, deaneries and other units but they all juridically belong to one entity under the resident diocesan bishop. In some cases, church organisations are transparochial or transdiocesan, that is, they are not confined in particular parishes or dioceses. Insofar as they operate with the approval of the resident bishop within the diocese, they technically belong to the local Church.

Figure 1: Organogram of actors in the Roman Catholic Church[28]



[28] Adapted from *The Code of Canon Law*, 98-106.

Ordinarily a local Church is geographically bounded, and run by a resident diocesan bishop with his auxiliary bishops, if any, and a council of priests (Presbyteral Council). The Roman Pontiff appoints bishops. Once every five years, the resident diocesan bishop of the local Church reports to the Bishop of Rome, the Roman Pontiff, concerning his diocese. This is an important connection to the universal Church leadership as the principle of subsidiarity, that is, relative autonomy of the local governance of the see (diocese), operates in this relationship. For John Wilkins, Vatican II reclaimed the import of the local Church in this way: 'Each local church *is* the whole Church of that place: it is not a department run from the Roman centre.'[29]

Unlike some previous studies that differentiated and at times set in opposition the hierarchy (ordained ministers) and *Iglesia Popular* (popular Church),[30] this study takes the Church in its entirety (leaders *and* members) at the same time noting their internal differentiations and power relations. Within the hierarchy are individuals with differing ecclesiological and ideological preferences, although they can arrive at a consensus and issue collective statements. The lay people are equally differentiated in terms of their socio-economic stratification, gender differences and other such factors, but they can as a body decide and act collectively. In this way, the members of the hierarchy (bishops, priests, and deacons) do not completely represent the Church anymore than do the lay organisations or individuals, if left to themselves. Put simply, the Church comprises both its leaders and members that are by no means homogenous. The internal organisational relationship between leaders and members is the Church *ad intra*. This consists of the vertical interaction between church leaders and members.

Another key dimension of the Church is its involvement with civil society organisations. Here, the Church's relationship with civil society organisations is the Church *ad extra*. This horizontal linkage is crucial in understanding the Church as an agency engaged in

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[29] Wilkins, 'How Vatican II changed the Church I....

[30] Haynes, *Religion in third world politics*....; Emile Poulat, 'The Path of Latin American Catholicism,' in *Church and politics in Latin America*, Dermot Keogh, ed., (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1990), 1-24.

democratisation. Both are not monolithic and not entirely mutually exclusive since there are church-based organisations and movements that form part of civil society.

1.2.2 Civil Society

It is crucially important to unpack the concept of civil society where the Church operates, partly belongs, and draws its network and alliances. Gordon White refers to civil society as a 'sociological counterpart to the market in the economic sphere and to democracy in the political sphere.'[31] With regard to the former, neo-liberals and a few neo-Marxists, although for opposite reasons, see the inclusion of the economy in the contemporary concept of civil society.[32] While not dismissing the importance of the Church's contributions to the economic sphere, it is the Church's role in enhancing political democracy that this study purports to examine.

Civil society has different meanings. Concepts around civil society have evolved considerably, at times competitively, in the history of ideas.[33] The renewed interest in civil society followed the proliferation of social movements which toppled the 'Soviet bloc' of states in the 1989 revolutions, notably in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany. In this context, civil society served as a significant counterweight to state power and as a key player in collapse of the communist regimes. Through the years, the role of civil society has been cast largely in its opposition to the State, a relationship which needs reinvention in the light of post-authoritarian democracy. The upsurge of civil society suggests that transition to democracy is no longer a sole preserve of elite actors but necessitates the participation of ordinary citizens. In this research, the scope of civil society consists of 'an intermediate associational realm between state and family (or household) populated by organisations which are separate from the state,

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[31] Gordon White, 'Civil society, democratisation and development (I): clearing the analytical ground,' *Democratization* 1(3) (1994), 375.
[32] Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil society and political theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 74-75.
[33] Cohen and Arato, *Civil society and political theory*; Michael Walzer, 'The Civil society argument,' in *Theorizing citizenship*, Ronald Beiner, ed., (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 153-174.

enjoy autonomy in relation to the state and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their interests or values.'[34] The associational realm is akin to the public sphere beyond the state domain where organised public life and autonomous associations function.[35] Similarly for Michael Walzer, civil society denotes 'the space of uncoerced human association and also the set of relational networks—formed for the sake of family, faith, interest, and ideology.'[36] Civil society in this sense consists of voluntary organisations, social movements, organised communities, kinship groups, and associations that are primarily oriented to articulate, represent, protect, and advance their collective interests and values, even those that go beyond national boundaries. Civil society organisations confronting the issues raised by globalisation has demonstrated its capacity to link up with the international community. They are relatively organised and they assume a collective form different from atomised individuals in the absence of a social network.[37] In addition, civil society organisations are neither homogenous associations nor are they typically virtuous development actors confronting the political vice of the State. There could well be associations which appear to be critical of democracy just as there are those which profess to be democratic actors. In some cases, particularly in the African experience, there are ethnic cleavages within the civil society formation.[38]

The Church, particularly in the Philippine setting, has a vital role in civil society considering its network and influence: from smallest political unit (the *sitio*) to the subnational, national, and international levels; the Church's presence cannot be ignored. Given the general weakness of the party system in the Philippines,[39] the Church perhaps is the only actor in the

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[34] White, 'Civil society, democratisation and development (I)..., 379.
[35] John Keane, *Civil society: old images, new visions* (Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press, 1998), 6.
[36] Walzer, 'The Civil society argument,' 153
[37] Axel Hadenius and Fredrik Uggla, 'Making civil society work, promoting democratic development: what states and donors do?' *World Development* 24(10), (1996), 1621.
[38] Nelson Kasfir, 'Introduction: the conventional notion of civil society: a critique,' in *Civil society and democracy in Africa: critical perspectives* in Nelson Kasfir, ed. (London, Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass, 1998), 1-20.
[39] Gabriella Montinola, 'Parties and accountability in the Philippines,' *Journal of Democracy* 10(1), (January 1999), 126-140.

Philippines which can parallel the extent of network that the government has.[40]

1.2.3 Democracy

Like the concept of civil society, the meanings of democracy are manifold and at times competing. A minimalist view takes primacy of electoral contestation as the defining characteristic of democracy. Joseph Schumpeter, for instance, claims that at the core of democracy is an 'institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.'[41] This position relies largely on electoral procedure and does not pay enough attention to the contributions of organised groups in democracy building. An opposing view, however, stresses the role of collective decision-making, popular control and equality as crucial indicators of democracy. Following this point, David Beetham argues that in a democratic polity 'decision-making should be controlled by *all* members of the group or collectivity considered as *equals*.'[42] This definition is difficult to assess empirically and appears to be prescriptive in its approach.

The definition employed here seeks to incorporate the concerns of the two opposing views above. Following Larry Diamond, apart from the electoral procedure, democracy is defined in terms of 1) 'the absence of reserved domains of power for the military or other actors not accountable to the electorate,' 2) vertical accountability of elected officials to citizens and horizontal accountability of public officials (among themselves), and 3) 'political and civil pluralism as well as for individual and group freedoms' through interest articulation, contestation and representation.[43] This definition privileges civilian authority over military and actors

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[40] Interview with Mary Racelis, Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC) Executive Director, Quezon City, 15 February 2001; see John Carroll, 'Civil society, the Churches, and the ouster of Erap,' in *Between fires: fifteen perspectives on the Estrada crisis* ed., Amando Doronila, (Makati City: Philippine Daily Inquirer and Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, Inc., 2001), 246.
[41] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, socialism and democracy* (London: Unwin, 1965), 269.
[42] David Beetham, 'Conditions for democratic consolidation,' 159. Emphases mine.
[43] Larry Diamond, *Developing democracy toward consolidation* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 10-11.

without an electoral mandate, accountability of elected and public officials, and recognises the importance of civil society actors' participation in building democracy. Democracy in this context, however, does not pretend to be a panacea for problems around class relations, ethnicity and gender. Nonetheless, the participation of marginalised sectors of society in a democratic polity may address questions of social and gender inequalities. Admittedly the definition has conceptual limits, but it is a defensible concept as a starting point in this research.

Democratisation is a continuous process involving political changes which are essentially participatory and democratic.[44] There is no one single and predictable outcome of democratisation. Democracies may consolidate, deepen, or they could be eroded and reversed. Building post-authoritarian democracy constitutes a broad process of democratisation including democratic transition after a regime change. For Scott Mainwaring, the manner of democratic transition has a bearing on the prospects of building post-authoritarian democracy.[45] The divide between democratic transition, that is, a political process involving regime shift from non-democracy to democratisation, and building post-authoritarian democracy is, by no means, clear and distinct. They tend to overlap, but one can separate analytically the two moments to make it plain that it is one thing to transform a non-democratic polity and quite another to sustain democracy and make it endure.

Transition to democracy is not enough since no democracy endures and becomes sustainable by mere default on the part of political agencies.[46] Various emphases on democratisation that at times compete with each other have been put forward. The Schumpeterian view holds that an operative electoral system is a *sine qua non* condition of any democracy. Regular elections ensure that the national and local public leaders have an electoral

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[44] David Potter, 'Explaining democratization,' in *Democratization* David Potter *et al.*, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 3.
[45] Scott Mainwaring et *al.*, *Issues in democratic consolidation* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992).
[46] Larry Diamond, 'Is the third wave of democratisation over? The imperative of consolidation,' Working Paper 237 (Notre Dame: the Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, 1997).

mandate, directly or indirectly. Although the electoral system is certainly not a sufficient condition in a democracy, the participation of voters in elections is a defining character of a democratic regime.[47] Others argue that economic growth is the main determinant of democracy.[48] In this view, the prospects for democratisation increase with economic development. For some, however, without negating the value of an electoral system, political culture is a very significant factor in maintaining democracy. Diamond argues that the development of a political culture, namely, beliefs, sentiments, values and ideas that give legitimacy to democracy, underpins democratisation.[49] In another vein, civil society advocates believe that associational life is key to the vibrancy of any democratic life.[50] Still, others make a case for the rule of law as an essential component of democratisation.[51] Some are inclined to think that human rights advocacy engenders a brand of citizenship that deepens democratic institutions in post-authoritarian regimes.[52] This study does not seek to resolve the contentious issues on democratisation. It is proposed, however, that citizenship is another window on which the Catholic Church does potentially make a significant progress in democracy building. This theme remains topical and could offer insights as regards the Church's roles in democracy.

1.2.4 Citizenship

Citizenship is a relatively recent interest in development and democratic studies. The exercise of citizenship does not always presume that democracy is working, but it is vital in any democratising polity. Citizenship is not merely the exercise of civil, political and social rights

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[47] Guillermo O'Donnell, 'Polyarchies and the (Un)Rule of law in Latin America,' in *The (Un)Rule of law and the underprivileged in Latin America*, Juan Mendez, Guillermo O'Donnell and Paulo Sergio, eds., (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 304-305.
[48] E.g., Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man* (London: Heinemann, 1960);
[49] Diamond, *Developing democracy toward consolidation*, 161-217.
[50] Robert D. Putnam, *Making democracy work: civic traditions in modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); see also Michael W. Foley and Bob Edwards, 'The Paradox of civil society' *Journal of Democracy* 7(3), (July 1996) 38-52.
[51] Juan Mendez, Guillermo O'Donnell and Paulo Sergio, eds., *The (Un)Rule of law and the underprivileged in Latin America* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999).
[52] Elizabeth Jelin and Eric Hershberg, eds., *Constructing democracy: human rights, citizenship, and society in Latin America* (Boulder, Colorado: Westerview Press, Inc., 1996).

asserted in the work of T. H. Marshall,[53] nor is it simply the legal claims of individuals on the State like a bundle of rights given to citizens by virtue of their membership in a given polity.[54] This largely rights-based and status-oriented liberal notion of citizenship presupposes that individuals act rationally while the State protects the exercise of rights by citizens. An opposing view of citizenship prioritises the common good over individual rights. This communitarian view stresses the importance of 'socially-embedded citizen and community belonging' where collective rights and individual responsibilities are exercised.[55] The civic-republican notion of citizenship incorporates individual rights within a collective framework but stresses individual responsibilities to community life through deliberation and negotiated arrangements.[56] The notion of citizenship used in this study draws elements from the three schools of thought raised above: individual rights as provided for by the State (liberal), community belonging and the primacy of the common good (communitarian), and exercise of rights and responsibilities in a deliberative process (civic republican). In this way, citizenship is a status (comprising rights and obligations) *and* active participation which often is shaped by class and gender relations, political identities, ethnicities and other such factors.[57] This is akin to Margaret Somers's claim that citizenship is 'a set of institutionally embedded social practices' derived from one's 'network of relationships and political idioms that stress membership and universal rights and duties in a national community.'[58] The 'institutionally embedded social practices,' mediated through laws and institutions, centre around membership rules, and rights and responsibilities

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[53] T. H. Marshall, *Class, citizenship, and social development* (New York: Doubleday, 1964), 65-123.
[54] See Karol Edward Soltan, 'Introduction: civic competence, democracy, and the good society,' in *Citizen competence and democratic institutions*, Stephen L. Elkin and Karol Edward Soltan, eds., University Park, Pennsylvania: the Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 2.
[55] Emma Jones and John Gaventa, 'Concepts of citizenship: a review,' *IDS Development Bibliography* 19 (2002), 4.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 5.
[58] Margaret Somers, 'Citizenship and the place of the public sphere: law, community, and political culture in the transition to democracy,' *American Sociological Review* 58 (October 1993), 587.

expected of a citizen.[59] These institutionalised political entitlements and duties arise out of people's interaction with each other over time and from the political identity with which they share. The locus of citizenship, however, does not limit itself to the national community as Somers suggests, but also includes the local and global contexts.

The exercise of one's citizenship can democratise a political regime.[60] As such, this strikes a distinction between a citizen and an inhabitant. Without political affiliation and bereft of any political rights and responsibilities, the person remains an inhabitant without political entitlements and duties.[61] A citizen, however, who is conscious of political rights and obligations can potentially articulate and channel one's own public perceptions, political interests and needs. In this way, a citizen becomes a real actor in a given democratic polity. This idea builds on the proverbial note that 'democracy cannot do without democrats.'[62] Engaged citizens, acting individually and collectively, will try to ensure that democracy works.

1.3 Methodology

Apart from treating the Church in the national scene, two dioceses in the Philippines are examined at greater depth: the Diocese of Bacolod and the Diocese of Malaybalay. These local Churches are by no means typical representatives of the Philippine Catholic Church (see Figure 2 next page). The local Churches maintain specificities even within their own regions. While the cases are not intended to represent the national or regional Church, they provide insights into the dynamics and complexities of the Philippine Church. These two local Churches were radicalised and politicised during the Marcos years. In the post-authoritarian period, while still

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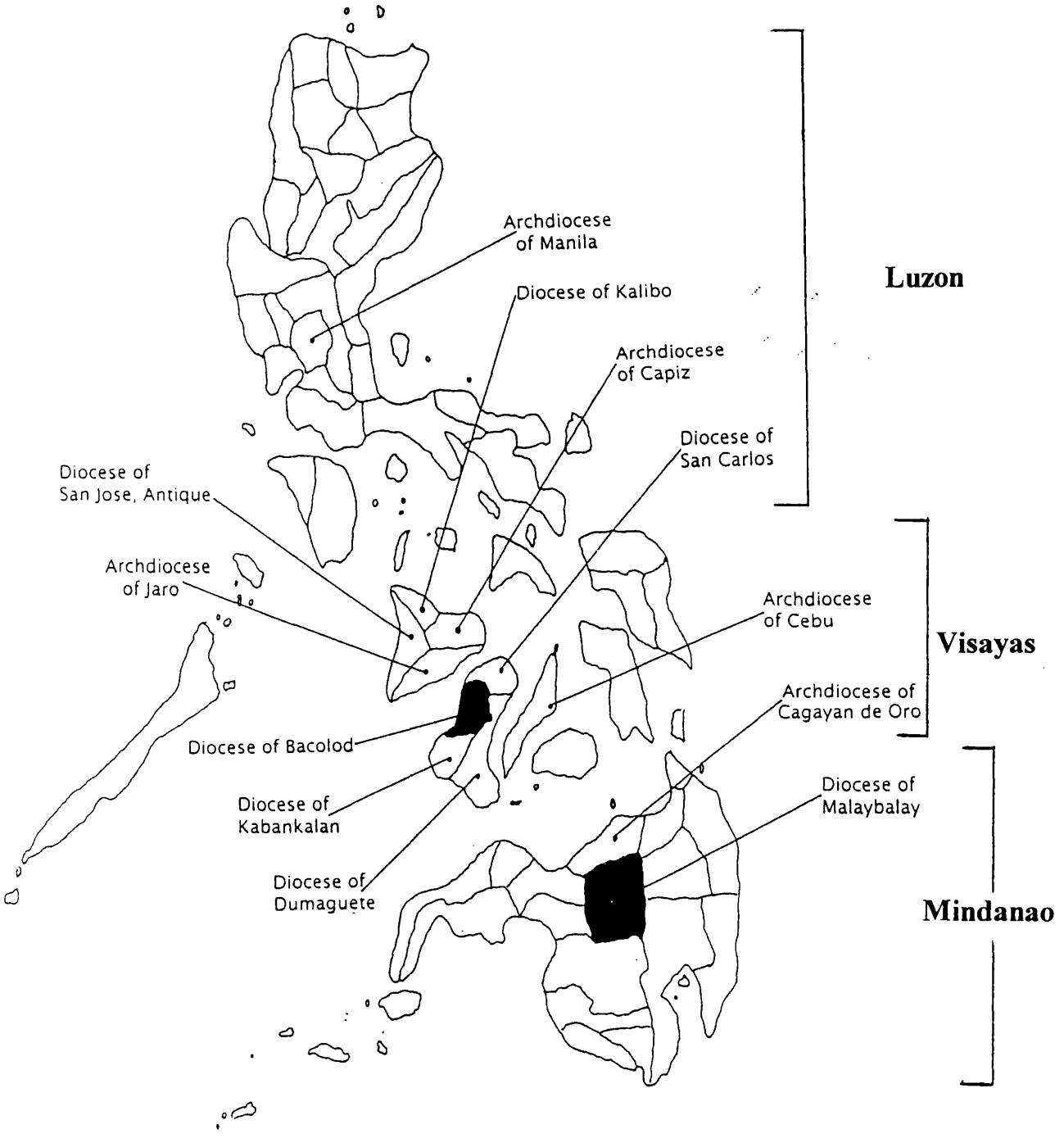
[59] Maria Serene I. Diokno, 'Becoming a Filipino citizen: perspectives on citizenship and democracy,' in *Philippine Democracy Agenda: democracy and citizenship in Filipino political culture* Vol. 1 (Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, 1997), 28-31.
[60] Lucy Taylor, *Citizenship, participation and democracy: changing dynamics in Chile and Argentina* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1998), 12.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Hadenius and Uggla, 'Making civil society work...., 1622.

Figure 2: Some local churches in the ecclesiastical map of the Philippines



Source: *2000 Directory of the Philippines* (Quezon City: CBCP and Claretian Publications, 2000), xvi-xviii. Map drawn by Jerry P. Masayon, August 2001.

politically active in some areas, they took divergent turns and emphases. Part of the study is to describe how and explain why the divergence has come about despite the similarity of experiences during the authoritarian period.

The choice of these two dioceses as case material is deliberate. Both dioceses responded positively to the reforms set out by Vatican II. Both dioceses had strong BCC/BEC movements particularly in the mid-1970s and 1980s. In the transition period, both engaged not only the local but also the national government, particularly in issues where democracy was at stake. In both cases, their respective bishops led the struggle of the local Churches, particularly in the authoritarian period. In both cases, the emergence of civil society forces factored in the Church's attempts to reinforce democracy in both local and national arenas. These qualifications justify the choice of the two dioceses.

A total of eighty-nine individual open and semi-focused interviews including six pairs were conducted on key informants (cf. Appendices, Appendix 1 for the Guide Questions). In Bacolod, many of the interviews were conducted in English, some in Tagalog, and a few, with the help of an interpreter, in Hiligaynon, the local language of the province.[63] In Malaybalay, most of the interviews were conducted in Cebuano, a widely-used language in Bukidnon, and a few in English. Snowball sampling was occasionally used to select key informants, that is, the people interviewed were asked to recommend other resource persons. The gender imbalance of the key informants is admittedly noticeable. Sixteen of the informants were female and sixty-one were male. This betrays the dominance of male perception of the Church which could be rectified in future research. On the whole, there seems to be a wide range of respondents coming from varied sectors. Thirty-eight respondents were members of the clergy (including bishops) and religious sisters, and forty were either lay people and/or critical observers of the Church.

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[63] Hiligaynon and Cebuano are closely related languages, possibly one a variant of the other. I am a native Cebuano speaker and would tend to understand 50% of Hiligaynon.

Some of the respondents were activists, intellectuals, government officials, business people, Protestants, and others who were not affiliated with any of the mainline Churches. All but three interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed. Four group interviews were made during on-site visits to small villages.

Some interviews conducted in Bacolod were particularly difficult given the acute polarisation of the Church at the time of the fieldwork. Some thought I was sent by ecclesiastical authorities to investigate the conflict in the local Church. Many views were conflicting depending on the camp to which the respondent belonged. One cautious respondent refused to have the interview recorded and quoted. To remedy the strong bias in both camps, I interviewed a good number of respondents who were of independent-mind and critical of the contending sides.

Other sources of data included the local and national newspapers, national surveys on public opinion, historical documents, monographs, personal communication with four key informants when face-to-face interviews were not possible, published materials, documentations and archival records from both the Church and the government. This study also takes on board my personal experience in the civil society movement and church circles for two decades now. Since 1979, I have been involved in various sectors of the civil society movement: students, labour unions, urban poor, religious sector, electoral movements, and other national and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and peoples' organisations (POs). In both People Power I (collapse of the Marcos government in 1986) and People Power II (removal of the Estrada administration in 2001), I was personally involved more in the former than in the latter. As a member of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) since 1983, I became directly involved in church affairs in the various places of my assignments in the Philippines. Being a priest-researcher was both an asset and a liability in the conduct of the fieldwork. A Roman Catholic priest in Philippine society still commands relatively high confidence and trust from the public.

It meant having easy access to the various sources and data which otherwise would be confidential or inaccessible. However, in a few cases, it also meant that some of the informants either tended to be extra measured in their responses or painted a rosy picture to make an impression about the Church. In the first case, they were assured of confidentiality, particularly when they declared that the matter is 'off-the-record.' In the second case, their responses were re-examined carefully.

During the fieldwork, Christian communities, villages, church organisations and establishments were visited. Three months were given to Metro Manila to gather national data and follow closely the Church's involvement in the Church's engagement in good governance that led to the ouster of President Estrada. Seven months were devoted to the two local Churches gathering, processing (e.g., transcribing interviews), sorting the data and writing narratives about the dioceses. These narratives were shown to local people and external observers for comments. These were subsequently revised to form part of the empirical chapters of the thesis.

Chapter two

Towards a theoretical framework explaining the Church's roles in democracy building

> *By the side of every religion is to be found a political opinion, which is connected with it by affinity.*
> --Alexis de Tocqueville[1]

This literature review incorporates the key elements of the proposed theoretical framework. Firstly, it discusses the roles of the Church during the democratic transition along with its Church *ad intra* dynamics. Secondly, it explores the interventions of the Church in building post-authoritarian democracy. Thirdly, it examines Church *ad extra* interaction and show how this may strengthen democracy. Fourthly, it investigates the Church's cultivation and practice of citizenship as a window on building democracy. Finally, it assesses the possibilities and limits of the theoretical framework.

2.1 The Church during the period of democratic transition and Church *ad intra* (hierarchy-laity interaction)

Much of the existing literature on church and democracy concerns the democratic transition and only partially encompasses the period after that. The literature written in 1970s and 1980s on the subject focuses on the hierarchical Church as it increasingly dissociates itself from the State. These materials typically see the hierarchy as the main official organ of the Church and its members take their cue from its pronouncements. This is reflected in the works of Ivan Vallier[2] and Thomas Sanders.[3] Both Vallier and Sanders distinguish church leaders from members of the flock. It is to these church elites; the episcopal hierarchy for Vallier, the bishops, and priests and lay leaders for Sanders; that the religious energy for opposing the State and social change

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[1] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, I, 300.
[2] Ivan Vallier, *Catholicism, social control, and modernization in Latin America* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970).
[3] Thomas Sanders, 'The Church in Latin America,' *Foreign Affairs* 48(2), (January 1970), 285-299.

gradually took form.[4] Fairly recent conceptions of the Church in the works of John Witte, Jr.,[5] Thomas S. Bokenkotter,[6] and José Casanova,[7] and those writers focusing on the Philippine experience,[8] although cognizant of the contributions of the local communities, similarly zero in on the Church in the macro sphere as it disengages from the State. By stressing the role of the hierarchy and other national church elites, this literature invariably tends to mask local Church initiatives and contributions in the democratisation project.

In the transition period, Samuel Huntington offers a most optimistic view of the Church's contributions to democracy.[9] John Witte's collection of essays linking the Church and democracy shares the same optimism of Huntington.[10] The authors in the Witte collection used sociological, theological and feminist perspectives to pursue the Huntington thesis, but unfortunately no writer offered a theory of democracy whereby the experience can be analysed with some rigour. Huntington's notion of the third wave of democratisation consists of the phenomenal period between 1974 and early 1990s when some thirty non-democratic regimes transited to become democratic political systems.[11] Huntington observes that in 1988, thirty nine of the forty-six democratic countries, that is, eighty-five percent were largely of Western Christian religion whereas only seven of the fifty eight democratic countries or 12 percent were

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[4] Ralph Della Cava, 'Catholicism and society in twentieth-century Brazil,' *Latin American Research Review* 11(2), (1976), 8.
[5] John Witte, Jr., ed., *Christianity and democracy in global context* (Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westerview Press, 1993).
[6] Thomas S. Bokenkotter, *Church and revolution: Catholics in the struggle of democracy and social justice* (New York: Image Books, 1998).
[7] José Casanova, *Public religions in the modern world* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[8] Robert Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church: economic development and political repression in the Philippines* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990); Gasper Gretchen, *Fragile democracies: the legacies of authoritarian rule* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995); John J. Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting? Churches and the transition to democracy in the Philippines,' Monograph 20, *Pulso* (August 1999).
[9] Samuel Huntington, *The Third wave: democratisation in the late twentieth century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 72-85; Samuel Huntington, 'Democracy's third wave,' *Journal of Democracy* 2(2), (1991), 12-34.
[10] Witte, *Christianity and democracy in global context.*
[11] Huntington notes the following waves of democratisation: first long wave of democratisation (1828-1926); first reverse wave (1922-42); second short wave of democratisation (1943-62); second reverse wave (1958-75); and the Third wave of democratisation (1974--). See Huntington, *The Third Wave...*, 16.

of other predominant religions.[12] He proposes that there appears to be a strong correlation between Western Christianity and building democracy.[13] Huntington sees five crucial factors that explain the third wave: 1) global economic development; 2) renewal of the Roman Catholic Church; 3) the increasing legitimacy crises of authoritarian States; 4) shifts in the role of international bodies such as the European community, the United States, former Soviet Union, and 5) the 'snowballing' effects of democratic transition experiences.[14] Of these variables, Huntington claims that 'Catholicism was second only to economic development as a pervasive force making for democratisation in the 1970s and 1980s.'[15] Indeed the symbol of this wave of democratisation 'could well be a crucifix superimposed on a dollar sign.'[16]

Some factors contributed to the transition to democracy of many Catholic nations. Historically, Huntington claims, Protestant countries enjoyed better economic well-being compared with the Catholic countries which were generally poor. Economic development in these Catholic countries, he argues, placed them in a better position to wage a democratic transition.[17] Moreover, the doctrinal and pastoral changes that swept across the Catholic Church throughout the world following the reforms set out by Vatican II made an enormous difference to the Church's public role.[18]

Changes were also noticeable at the grassroots level with the rise of the CEBs with different ideological proclivities. The CEBs from below, coupled with reforms from above, Huntington claims, produced a 'new church' that resisted military and authoritarian regimes.[19] He cites too the leadership of some key figures in the Church that led the opposition against dictatorships: Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns in Brazil, Archbishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador, Su-

[12] Ibid., 73.
[13] Ibid., 72-73.
[14] Ibid., 45-46.
[15] Ibid., 85.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid., 76-77.
[18] Ibid., 77-78.
[19] Ibid., 79.

Han Cardinal Kim in South Korea, Jaime Cardinal Sin in the Philippines.[20] The pastoral visits of John Paul II in Catholic countries (particularly in Poland) during the dictatorship rule made an impact in the inauguration of democracy.[21]

Huntington's notion of the third wave has set a discourse in church-state and democratic studies during the 1990s. However, there are crucial issues in his exposition that relate to this study. First, the third wave of democratisation, particularly in the developing countries, was uneven as shown in the study of Robin Luckham and Gordon White.[22] Their findings seem to nuance the sweeping generalisation that the third wave was uniformly democratic in character. Indeed within the Catholic Church, Vatican II reforms proceeded unevenly since within the hierarchy and laity disparate and at times opposing doctrinal and pastoral tendencies representing certain interests and values continued to affect the public role of the Church. Second, by locating his analysis during the 1970s and 1980s, he largely limits his analysis to the transition phase. Obviously some countries like Portugal and Spain at that time point were starting to consolidate their democratic gains. Others like the Philippines (from 1986) and Brazil (from 1987) were still in transition while Poland (from 1989), South Africa (from 1989) and a host of African countries (1990s) were only beginning to make their transition to democracy. Thus beyond the democratic transition setting appears insufficiently treated in Huntington. Third, Huntington limits his treatment largely on democratisation by way of church-state relations at the macro sphere. Although Huntington is aware of the initiatives of the basic Christian communities, he leaves very little room to examine their dynamics with the hierarchical leadership. Fourth, typical of the literature on the Church in democratic transition, church-state opposition has frequently dominated the paradigm to explain the Church's democratic impulse. There is very little insight one can find on the Church's partnership and interaction with civil

[20] Ibid., 82.
[21] Ibid., 83.
[22] Robin Luckham and Gordon White, *Democratisation in the south: the jagged wave* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 274-277.

society actors and subsequently its engagement with the State and society. Thus Huntington narrows the real context of the Church's role, which in practical terms concerns engagement not only with the State but also with civil society. In sum, Huntington does not sufficiently address the Church's involvement beyond its opposition against authoritarian regimes.

A more thoroughgoing monolithic conception of the Church is provided by Anthony Gill and those that followed his line of thinking.[23] Using the rational-actor framework, Gill examines the Church as a rational agent behaving according to the calculus of costs and benefits. In his view, the Church's conflict or cooperation as the case may be vis-à-vis the State can be explained similarly along the lines of this economic logic. The Church, and by this, Gill means the hierarchical leadership primarily, like any other economic actor, seeks to protect and advance corporate gains and minimise losses.[24] Gill applies the same principle with regard to the Church's tendency to compete with the Pentecostal movement, one that has grown by leaps and bounds in Latin America.[25] In all this, Gill focuses on the *official* political strategies which are often declared by the national episcopacy where grassroots organisations must ultimately receive hierarchical sanction for their survival.[26]

While Gill alerts keen observers on church and politics to the collective interests which could militate against the Church's vision of human development and democracy, his view of the Church as a unitary economic actor tends to homogenise the complexity within the Church structure. This view oversimplifies the Church's motives and the outcomes of its interventions

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[23] Anthony J. Gill, *Rendering unto Ceasar: the Catholic Church and the State in Latin America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Anthony Gill, 'The Economics of evangelization,' in *Religious freedom and evangelization in Latin America* Paul Sigmund, ed., (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), 70-84. Other writers likewise follow Gill's notion of the Church as a rational actor. See Stephen R. Warner, 'A New paradigm for sociological study of religion in the United States,' *American Journal of Sociology* 98(5), (1993), 1044-1093; Robert B. Ekelund, Robert F. Hebert and Robert D. Tallison, 'An Economic model of the Medieval Church,' *Journal of Law, Economics and Organizations* 5(2), (1989), 305-331.

[24] Anthony Gill, 'The Struggle to be soul provider: Catholic responses to Protestant growth in Latin America,' in *Latin American religion in motion* Christian Smith and Joshua Prokopy, eds., (New York and London: Routledge, 1999), 17-42.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Gill, *Rendering unto Caesar*, 4-5.

which may not be necessarily nor primarily in economic terms. His excessive regard for the hierarchical position appears to downplay initiatives from and interaction with local communities. By implication, this weakens the import of the 'people of God' ecclesiology outlined in Vatican II, and the potential of creative interaction with civil society since the Church is presumed to be largely protective of its own corporate interests.

Thus far, views espoused by earlier writers and fairly recent writings of Huntington, Gill and those who have followed their lead tend to overemphasise the roles of the hierarchy. These ideas are at best partial conceptions of the Church's own self-understanding of its nature as a pilgrim 'people of God' with its hierarchical element. Using macro level analysis of church-state relations, they insufficiently address the post-authoritarian context of democracy building in the national, sub-national and local contexts.

Apart from the highly hierarchical conception of the Church, another view of the subject looks at the local and basic communities as the prime movers of social transformation leading to the inauguration of democracy. The phenomenal surge of CEBs in Latin America in the 1970s and mid-1980s grabbed the limelight of political investigation from a highly hierarchical conception of the Church in the earlier literature. There is considerable debate on the extent of CEBs' political influence during the transition phase.[27] A minority opinion led by orthodox Marxists insists that CEBs' involvement or any church influence for that matter was not a central but merely an ancillary force in popular mobilisation leading to democratisation.[28] Mainline opinion, although to varying degrees, maintains that CEBs were vital religio-political protagonists during the transition period. CEBs lent direct political support to social movements, resisted authoritarian regimes, and provided spaces for political actors to meet and plan their

[27] William H. Swatos, Jr., ed., *Religion and democracy in Latin America* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1995).
[28] W. E. Hewitt, 'Religion and the consolidation of democracy in Brazil: the role of the *comunidades eclesiais de base* in *Religion and democracy in Latin America*, William Swatos, Jr., ed., (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1995), 46-47.

political action.[29] Nevertheless, their political significance in the post-authoritarian era appears to be dwindling owing to the withdrawal of hierarchical church support,[30] inherent weaknesses of CEBs,[31] lack of a more focused agenda,[32] the challenges brought about by the new democratic context, and finally because of the proliferation of the Pentecostal movement.[33] Questions too have been raised regarding the strength in quantity and quality of these CEBs as supposed by liberation theologians and their advocates.[34] A minority opinion, however, claims that CEBs continue to exert political influence locally in the post-authoritarian period.[35]

Studies on CEBs and their impact on democratisation abound in the literature. David Lehmann represents the thinking of some of these writers in the literature. He examines the relationship between Latin American democracy and development.[36] He attempts to establish a connection between 'post Marxist democratic theory and local-level politics.'[37] He believes that the State (macro level) has not demonstrated itself as a capable actor in the modernisation project. Thus one must consider taking development *from below* which is what *basismo* stands for.[38] Lehmann asserts: 'It is to this myriad of organized activities, to the *comunidades de base*, and to the ideological biases which accompany them, that I refer when I speak of *basismo*.'[39] Briefly, CEBs typify *basismo*. Lehmann identifies five key features of *basismo*: 1) grassroots

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[29] Christian Smith, 'The spirit and democracy: base communities, Protestantism, and democratisation in Latin America,' in *Religion and democracy in Latin America*, William Swatos, Jr., ed., (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1995), 82-83; James C. Cavendish, 'Christian base communities and the building of democracy: Brazil and Chile,' in *Religion and democracy in Latin America*, William Swatos, Jr., ed., (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1995), 4-10.
[30] Hewitt, 'Religion and the consolidation of democracy in Brazil..., 55-57.
[31] Iain S. Maclean, *Opting for democracy? Liberation theology and the struggle for democracy in Brazil* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 176.
[32] Cavendish, 'Christian base communities and the building of democracy,' 88.
[33] Carol Ann Drogus, 'The Rise and decline of Liberation Theology,' *Comparative Politics* 27(4), (July 1995), 465.
[34] Phillip Berryman, *Religion in the megacity: Catholic and Protestant portraits from Latin America* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996), Chapter 5.
[35] Rowan Ireland, 'Popular religions and the building of democracy in Latin America: saving the Tocquevillian parallel,' *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 41(4), (Winter 1999), 111-136.
[36] David Lehmann, *Democracy and development in Latin America: economics , politics and religion in the post-war period* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990)
[37] Stephen Glazier, 'Latin American perspectives on religion and politics,' *Latin American Research Review* 30(1), 253.
[38] Lehmann, *Democracy and development in Latin America...*, 214.
[39] Ibid., 186.

organisations; 2) high proportion of women leadership relative to other social movements; 3) engagement and partnership with the local government; 4) capacity for institution-building; and 5) funding linkages with ideological and donor agencies.[40] These features connect well with the democratisation project since they basically enhance participation of local groups and organisations. Lehmann, however, ignores evidently *basismo*'s engagement with hierarchical leadership. His hesitation to engage the State beyond the local context weakens its import in the sub-national or national sphere.

Scott Mainwaring and Alexander Wilde, although sympathetic to the political crusade of the base communities, do not go as far as Lehmann in dissociating them from the hierarchical leadership.[41] Mainwaring and Wilde investigate the internal dynamics within the Church; the emergence of the progressive sector within the Church; the nature and causes of the changes that swept the Church; and the tensions that deeply divided progressives and conservatives. Their anthology examines the complexity of the progressive Latin American Churches in Brazil, Peru, Nicaragua and El Salvador not only as acted-upon by national exigencies but also as political actors.[42] By 'progressive church' they mean that which synonymously applies to '*Iglesia popular*' (popular Church), 'the grassroots church,' 'church of the poor,' but not as a distinct church within a larger Church.[43] Mainwaring and Wilde argue that more often than not 'the progressive Church does not eschew the institutionality of the Church as a whole but rather has attempted to develop an alternative conception of that institutionality.'[44] This is an important point in understanding the complexity of the Church, but has not received the attention it deserves in the literature. This characterisation suggests that the 'progressive church' is not

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[40] David Lehmann, *Struggle for the Spirit: religious transformation and popular culture in Brazil and Latin America* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 29

[41] Scott Mainwaring and Alexander Wilde, 'The Progressive Church in Latin America: an interpretation,' in *The Progressive Church in Latin America*, eds., Scott Mainwaring and Alexander Wilde (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 1-37.

[42] Scott Mainwaring and Alexander Wilde, eds., *The Progressive Church in Latin America* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989)

[43] Mainwaring and Wilde, 'The Progressive Church in Latin America: an interpretation'...., 5.

[44] Ibid., 5.

merely the existence of radical elements in the Church, but 'that the center of gravity in these Churches is now more progressive.'[45] While the progressive Church was many a time at loggerheads with the hierarchical Church, the former did not see itself apart from the latter, no matter how sharp the conflict was.[46] The dispute between the hierarchical leadership and the so-called 'popular Church' was more complex than it appeared. Mainwaring and Wilde in this regard remark that one cannot assume that the hierarchical Church is by any means a singularly conservative body anymore than the CEBs are uniformly progressive.[47] These assertions are crucial in constructing a framework towards understanding the Philippine Church as a democratic actor: the internal dynamics of its disparate actors. Unfortunately, Mainwaring and Wilde's treatment scarcely touches upon the Church's involvement in post-authoritarian issues.

Along the lines proposed by Mainwaring and Wilde, Ronald Kassimir argues that rather than positing *a priori* a political role of civil society organisations, and by extension including the Church, one must first examine them using 'the lens of social power.'[48] This constitutes their capacity to socialise and mobilise groups for political action based on their 'internal organisational dynamics.'[49] Following Kassimir, 'internal organisational dynamics' are the relationship and interaction among leaders, and between them and their constituents as they define and actualise organisational goals.[50] To demonstrate his point, Kassimir uses the Ugandan Catholic Church as case material and investigates its limits and capacities to socialise and mobilise organisations to engage the State. Kassimir claims that the Ugandan Catholic Church 'lacks the kinds of linkages with its members that foster such mobilisation and the

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[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., 15-16.
[47] Ibid., 17; see also Daniel H. Levine, *Popular voices in Latin American Catholicism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 44-51.
[48] Ronald Kassimir, 'The Social power of religious organisation and civil society: the Catholic church in Uganda,' in *Civil society and democracy in Africa: critical perspectives* (London and Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass, 1998), 76-78.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid., 55-56.

mechanisms for socialising members into new values and roles.'[51] Weak 'internal organisational dynamics,' Kassimir argues, emasculated the Church's political resource and outcome.

A similar point is argued by Mary Gautier in explaining the Church's role in the restoration of civil society in communist societies in East Germany, Poland, and Hungary.[52] Political values, she maintains, are influenced by the Church through its elites (the ordained clergy) and through the shared values of its ordinary believers.[53] The emergence of the civil society movement in Central Europe in 1980s issued from both levels of influence: church elites and regular members. Unlike Kassimir, Gautier does not go forward to discuss what sort of interaction these two entities should have to produce desirable political outcomes.

Kassimir's construct seems to give importance to two layers of internal interaction: the definition and pursuit of organisational goals *among* the leaders themselves, and *then* between them and their members (baptised lay people). Kassimir's idea of leaders and members appears to be not differentiated enough and glosses over internal conflicts and power relations. Moreover, this sort of interaction between leaders and members appears to be unilateral, that is, issuing from the top to the bottom. While this mode of interaction may bid well in pressing and urgent cases needing swift discernment and action, in the definition and pursuit of organisational goals, there should be more inclusion of the ordinary lay people in the deliberation of the vision and mission of the Church. Kassimir's construct can be pushed a step forward by arguing for the kind of interaction between leaders and members that is more participative, shallow hierarchically and more discerning so that the Church leaders, who eventually will act on issues affecting the Church and society, are better informed. In the context of the dioceses which are under study in this research, internal organisational interaction consists of the hierarchical leadership, that is, the resident diocesan bishop and his presbyteral council (priests assisting the

[51] Ibid., 76.
[52] Mary L. Gautier, 'Church elites and the restoration of civil society in the communist societies in Central Europe,' *Journal of Church and State* 40(2), (Spring 1998), 292-293.
[53] Ibid.

bishop in ecclesial governance) with the consultative bodies including lay leaders as they, in consultation and deliberation with the regular members, local communities and organisations, define and pursue the goals of the diocese. This entails too that the laity with its broad spectrum of actors form a broad consensus on issues affecting the State and society. This construct avoids Kassimir's two-tiered interaction, that is, interaction *first* among leaders, and *then* between leaders and members. This conflates the two levels of interaction into one. Given the plurality of forces and ecclesiological cleavages underpinned by varying and contentious doctrinal positions within the hierarchy and laity, it is necessary to reduce internal contradictions that inhibit the Church's resolve and political outcomes. Church *ad intra* addresses these internal contradictions by persistent mutual communication within and between the hierarchy and laity. Hierarchy-laity interaction does presuppose the presence of intermediaries (e.g., organisations, persons and establishments). Thus local communities' interests can be generated, articulated and represented by the CEBs or BCCs with their leaders (priests or lay).

The insistence on elites-members interaction seems like a truism in an organisational structure, but often hugely understated or simply ignored in many attempts to explain the Church's capacity to strengthen democracy. Given the issues and opportunities in the post-authoritarian period, lessons from the literature tell us that neither the hierarchical Church alone (without grassroots mobilisation) nor the local base communities in themselves (without the support from hierarchical Church leadership) can muster enough force to sustain and influence political democracy in a profound way. Kassimir correctly argues that by ignoring its internal organisational capacities, linking the Church and democratisation has not been examined carefully.[54] Thus the possibilities and limits of the Church as a democratic protagonist are not laid bare adequately. This vertical linkage does not by any means connote that the Church is a monolithic actor. The internal capacity of the Church rises or falls with its internal organisational

[54] Kassimir, 'The Social power of religious organisation and civil society..., 55.

dynamics that includes interaction, conflict and difference between and within its entities. Put simply, vertical linkage (Church *ad intra*) between the leaders and members enhances the Church's capacity for socialisation and mobilisation of society for a political outcome such as democracy building. It induces participation from those ordinarily excluded. It widens the avenues for consultation, deliberation and participation towards informed decision-making. Nonetheless, Kassimir's argument, while mindful of the potential of civil society in constructing democracy, does not demonstrate the Church's functions within the civil society movement. His construct relies heavily on the vertical linkage and does not present the Church's possible roles with civil society (horizontal linkage) in post-authoritarian democracy.

In sum, the literature issuing from both hierarchical and popular views of the Church in the transition period is abundant, informative, and in many ways path-breaking in the whole discourse on church and democratisation. First, it recognises the transformations within the Catholic Church making it a potent religio-political actor in the transition period. Second, it narrates church-state disengagement, in particular, the Church's role in initiating and leading opposition against military and authoritarian regimes. Third, it shows the Church's disparate roles in democratic transition. Fourth, it sees the intra-church dynamics of the hierarchy and local communities as crucial factors in the Church's capacity to socialise and mobilise actors within the civil society network for a political outcome.

Notwithstanding the contributions of the existing literature on the transition period, there are understandably significant gaps that remain unattended. First, the time and location of the analysis limit the scope of the literature to the political and ecclesial contexts during that phase. Second, the church-state relations have been often moulded as opposing actors with very minimal post-authoritarian interaction between the two actors in building democracy. Third, church-state relations dominate the discourse in the literature. This masks church-civil society nexus in democratisation. The latter's political import in the transition period can be gleaned

from the experiences of Central Europe, South Korea, and Latin America.[55] Hence there is a need to re-examine the Church's role in post-authoritarian setting.

2.2 The Church's interventions in building post-authoritarian democracy

The literature on the Church's involvement in post-authoritarian democracy particularly in the long term is sparse. Hannah Stewart-Gambino outlines the changing contexts in the post-authoritarian period by noting three factors that have shaped the nature of church's involvement in Latin America: the democratic context, the emergence of the Pentecostal movement, and the restoration of the lines of church authority.[56] Firstly, the democratic climate has in many cases effectively whittled down the mobilising capacity of civil society organisations. Not only is the common political enemy gone, but also a democratic pluralist society has emerged. The Church in this new pluralist setting, more than ever, finds itself no longer taking the lead role in democratisation as in many cases in the transition period. Rather, it is merely one of the many players in the democratic arena. Secondly, the growth of the Pentecostal movement as a 'parallel church' posed a challenge to the dominance of the Catholic Church in Latin America.[57] Conflict and competition characterised the relationship between the Pentecostal movement and the Catholic Church. This phenomenon was likewise evident in developing regions in Africa,[58] and some countries in East and Southeast Asia (including the Philippines).[59] And thirdly, the centralising tendency of the Vatican leadership has led to the appointment of conservative bishops. There are a few examples of Vatican appointments in the post-authoritarian period

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[55] Gautier, 'Church elites and the restoration of civil society in the communist societies in Central Europe;' Chang Yun-Shik, 'The Progressive Christian Church and democracy in South Korea,' *Journal of Church and State* 40(2), (Spring 1998), 437-465;' Mehran Kamrava and Frank O. Mora, 'Civil society and democratisation in comparative perspective: Latin America and the Middle East,' *Third World Quarterly*, 19(5), 899-903.
[56] Stewart-Gambino, 'Introduction....'
[57] David Stoll, *Is Latin America turning Protestant? The politics of evangelical growth* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1990); David Martin, *Tongues of fire: the explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990).
[58] Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: its public role* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1998).
[59] Yun-Shik, 'The Progressive Christian Church and democracy in South Korea.'

which showed clear predilection for conservative leadership.[60] Brazil's Dom Helder Camara was replaced by conservative prelate Dom José Cardoso Sobrinho in 1985. In San Salvador, El Salvador, a ring-wing Opus Dei archbishop took over from progressive Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas in 1995.[61] In Lima, Peru, Opus Dei archbishop Juan Luis Cipriani was appointed in 1999. Klaiber, however, argues that in a few cases, the appointment of conservative bishops such as Archbishop Juan Francisco Fresno (Santiago, Chile) did not necessarily mean an immediate change in the overall thrust of the Church as the successors basically maintained the political strategy of their predecessors.[62]

In addition to Stewart-Gambino's reading, one could argue that the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe profoundly weakened many of the social and political movements that pinned their hopes in the socialist ideal. The net effect in all these factors was an increasing demobilisation in many cases of the Church. José Casanova sums up this phenomenon in this way:

> The successful transition to democracy and the ensuing institutionalisation of political society lead per force to a relative privatisation of Catholicism. Everywhere, once the phase of consolidation of democracy begins, the church tends to withdraw from political society proper, leaving this realm to professional politicians.... Everywhere, once the phase of consolidation begins, the political hour of a civil society, united in opposition to an authoritarian state, tends to come to an end. Even if the church wanted to resist this structural trend, it is unlikely that it would be able to maintain the highly prominent political role of the transitional phase.[63]

Stewart-Gambino's and Casanova's observations are to some extent reflected in the Philippine experience, but the process of demobilisation was uneven as the cases in this study show.

Apart from the issues raised above, the Church has in some instances been perceived to have acted, by impulse and by purposive intervention, to bring about undemocratic outcomes. Post-authoritarian Argentina, for instance, found the Church ambiguous in the manner and

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[60] Jeffrey Klaiber, 'Church and religion in Latin America,' n.d., 2-4.
[61] See 4.2.2, Chapter Four for more details on the nature of Opus Dei in the Philippine context.
[62] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America*, 14.
[63] Casanova, *Public religions in the modern world*, 133.

purpose of lobbying against legislation in favour of divorce and human rights.[64] The Polish Church too, after the demise of communism, was perceived to encroach upon democratic institutions in defence of its stance in favour of religious education in schools, its manner of lobbying against birth control, and the hierarchy's campaign for some candidates in partisan politics.[65] In Latin America, where there is an increasing demand to liberalise laws concerning personal and sexual morality (e.g., divorce, population control, equality of religious rights), church interventions in some cases have not been received as strengthening democratic institutions.[66] These areas are politically and religiously charged. Further, they are bound to create tensions between the Church and State, and between the Church and civil society.

Jeffrey Klaiber's comparative historical survey of Latin American Churches, their opposition to dictatorship and their promotion of democracy, opens up some possibilities of the Church in promoting democracy in the post-authoritarian period.[67] He carefully argues that the Church (the official leadership and local faith communities in general) contributed to the restoration and maintenance of democracy in five ways: religious delegitimation of dictatorships by public denunciation and symbolic gestures, defence of human rights, conferring legitimacy on opposing political actors, mediation of conflicts, and creation of participatory spaces for the opposition.[68] In all these, the defence of human rights and the mediation of conflicts stand out as significant contributions of the Church during the post-authoritarian setting, in the short run at least. With regard to the advocacy of human rights, the Church during and after the authoritarian period was a mouthpiece and grievance machinery for the victims of state abuses. In Latin America, Klaiber cites the human rights centres in Chile's Vicariate of Solidarity, in El

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[64] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America*, 89-90.
[65] Mirella W. Eberts, 'The Roman Catholic Church and democracy in Poland,' *Europe-Asia Studies* 50(5) 1998), 817-842; Frances Millard, 'The Influence of the Catholic Hierarchy in Poland 1989-96,' *Journal of European Social Policy* 7(2), (May 1997), 83-99.
[66] Michael Fleet and Brian H. Smith, *The Catholic Church and democracy in Chile and Peru*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997) 287-289.
[67] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America.*
[68] Ibid., 7-10.

Salvador's *Tutela Legal* (Legal Defence), São Paulo's Commission of Peace and Justice, as some examples of how victims were helped and how the abusive tendencies of the State were monitored and held at bay.[69] At that time particularly, the defence and promotion of human rights was a politically sensitive business. In many cases, it was plagued with a lot of controversies and some ambivalence for fear that the military would resume its rule over the people. However, the Bishops in Chile, El Salvador and Guatemala argued that national reconciliation could ~~only~~ take effect if those responsible own up to their misdeeds.[70]

Apart from getting involved in human rights issues, many Latin American Churches played a vital role in initiating peace between armed or opposition groups through their mediation of conflicts. In particular, Klaiber notes that the national accords in Chile and Paraguay and the national dialogues in Bolivia, El Salvador and Guatemala were principally spearheaded by the Church.[71] Although these national accords and dialogues were plagued with all sorts of problems coming from the government, military, and opposing parties, these attempts characteristically engendered the participation of significant actors by addressing issues concerning peace, human rights, and democracy building. In Guatemala and in El Salvador, 'the church participated in the peace process, not as a mere neutral spectator but as a protagonist with its own agenda.'[72] The Church in this way manifested its capacity to be an actor, mediator and moderator of society with regard to democracy. The Church's moral position in Latin America society made it the only national Organisation acceptable to warring and often armed groups.[73] The Church's wide public acceptability is extremely pivotal in pressing for its political reach and

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[69] Ibid., 8. See also Carl E. Meacham, 'The Role of the Chilean Church in the new Chilean democracy, *Journal of Church and State*, 36 (Spring 1994), 277-299; Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, *Democratic consolidation and human rights in Brazil*, Working Paper 256, (Notre Dame: The Hellen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, 1998); Edward L. Cleary, *The Struggle for human rights in Latin America* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1997).

[70] Brian H. Smith, *Religious politics in Latin America: Pentecostal vs. Catholic* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 52-53.

[71] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America, 264-265*

[72] Ibid., 265.

[73] Ibid., 263.

agenda, a crucial comparative advantage that the Philippine Church likewise enjoys.[74]

The defence of human rights and mediation of conflicts are potential factors in strengthening post-authoritarian democracy beyond the transition. In this way, Klaiber partially shows how the Church can contribute to strengthening democracy in the post-authoritarian setting. However, there are relevant issues that the Klaiber survey does not address. First, Klaiber deals extensively with issues in the transition period and therefore does not substantially analyse the Church's influence in the post-authoritarian. Second, Klaiber seems to focus his treatment mainly on macro church-state relations. Although he cites the Church's role in shaping the public agenda and providing a mechanism for interest articulation and representation as in the cases of the national accords and dialogues, Klaiber does not elaborate on the Church's engagement with civil society (apart from CEBs) in building democracy. And finally, since Klaiber's historical approach did not present a working definition of democracy, it is difficult to assess whether or not the Church in Latin America contributes to post-authoritarian democracy.

Michael Fleet and Brian Smith's comparative analysis of the Catholic Church in Chile and Peru is a step forward in the literature since they treat the post-authoritarian phase more extensively than others.[75] Their research examines the Church's political outcomes during the democratic transition and consolidation in Chile and Peru. They do not entirely focus their analysis on church-state relations at a macro level. They examine how the local communities, Catholic activists and bishops as units of analysis have been agents or obstacles in the democratisation of Chile and Peru. Their methodology involves extended interviews with church leaders and lay activists, attitudinal survey research and investigation of archival materials.[76] At the outset, the authors realise that the internal dynamics within the Latin American national Churches, their interactions with civil society and pastoral strategies have

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[74] John J. Carroll, 'Church and State: the light of the Gospel on public issues,' in *Duet for EDSA, looking back, looking forward,* 1996, Lorna Kalaw-Tirol, ed., (Manila: Foundations for Worldwide Power Inc., 1995), 190.
[75] Fleet and Smith, *The Catholic Church and democracy in Chile and Peru.*
[76] Ibid., 9.

posed new issues and opportunities as regards the future of the Churches and the whole development of many countries in the region.[77] They present the internal conflicts within the Church after the appointment of conservative prelates and the decline of the influence of the moderates and progressive bishops in the post-authoritarian Churches. But with the conservative appointees (e.g., Cardinal Fresno in Santiago, Chile), their effects on the life of the Church were not uniform, a point which Klaiber shares.[78]

Fleet and Smith suggest that the Catholic Church in Chile figured more prominently in democratic transition than in Peru. The hierarchy 'pressed for a peaceful and orderly transition, playing first a neutral, and then a mediatory, role.'[79] Nonetheless, the authors claim that the Chilean Church's contributions to the consolidation of democracy have been 'modest and at times obstructive.'[80] The politicised military of Augusto Pinochet continued to exercise its supremacy and autonomy which the Church was unable to hold at bay. By adopting a cautious stance for fear that the military would restore its rule as in the Pinochet days, the Church and its civilian supporters did not do much in terms of deepening democratisation in Chile. Here and there in Chile, the bishops and lay activists intervened in social justice and human rights issues, but the threat of another military rule proved too daunting to press ahead with their demands. This was further compounded by the division between progressive bishops and conservatives.[81] Additionally, the bishops' interventions in policy debates concerning issues such as divorce, birth control, public education and abortion have been seen as undermining democratic processes and values.[82] These issues are not infrequently a source of tension between the Church and civil society in the post-authoritarian period. In the Philippine context, this is a potential source of division between the Church and civil society when otherwise the two would generally be allies

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[77] Ibid., 8.
[78] Ibid., 271-272, 275; Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America*, 13-15.
[79] Fleet and Smith, *The Catholic Church and democracy in Chile and Peru* , 271.
[80] Ibid., 274, 279.
[81] Ibid., 275.
[82] Ibid., 159.

in the task of democratisation.

On the other hand, Peru had a deeply divided and ambivalent ecclesial leadership with regard to democracy during the transition period under the administration of Morales Bermúdez.[83] While individual progressive bishops spoke on crucial political and social issues, there were equally dissenting opinions from some elements of the hierarchy. This prevented the Peruvian bishops from promoting a wide consensus in support of democracy, unlike their counterparts in Chile. From the mid-1970s to the early 1990s 'Peru's reestablished democracy never took root.'[84] In the case of Peru, apart from the political and socio-economic crises that beset the country, civil society and the church leadership, withdrew from political involvement. In addition, the absence of church support for democratic groups proved to be a major setback in consolidating democracy.[85] In this regard, Fleet and Smith suggest that there is a potential role for the Church in civil society during the post-authoritarian democracy building. What exactly it is they do neither say nor demonstrate. While the authors are obviously aware of the potential of the Church's role in strengthening civil society as a pathway to building democracy, their research merely raised this possibility and did not go far enough to explore the relationship between the two.

Fleet and Smith's concluding remarks have a direct bearing on this research. They assert that the Church's 'political influence is primarily a function of the moral authority of its bishops, priests, sisters, and lay activists.'[86] Insofar as the Church enjoys a relatively high level of public confidence and continues to be engaged in non-partisan politics on the basis of moral authority, its influence with regard to the State and civil society can be far reaching. Fleet and Smith hypothesise that the moral and political influence of Church actors can be maintained particularly 'if they remain united and concern themselves with social issues that relate directly

[83] Ibid., 277.
[84] Ibid., 279.
[85] Ibid., 282.
[86] Ibid., 290.

to the Church's religious mission.'[87] This point shares much of the emphasis of the Church *ad intra* construct drawn above, but they have not really demonstrated how this achieves the desired political outcome. In exploring the possibilities of the Church in post-authoritarian era, Fleet and Smith rightly claim:

> In sum, if it is to be put to political use, the Church's moral authority must be exercised judiciously and infrequently. In times of crisis, the Church may serve as a surrogate political actor or social service provider. With secular forces or institutions unable to operate normally, Church authorities may take over their functions or launch initiatives of their own. In doing so, they may help to stabilize and sustain a country's social and political processes. They can also enhance the cause or credibility of specific groups for whom they choose to speak....[88]

These observations connect well with the experience of the Philippine Church. Given the political bankruptcy of the party system,[89] and weak political institutions,[90] the Church has time and again exercised its moral influence on key issues affecting the democratic life of society. As will be shown in the empirical chapters, the Philippine Church was not simply reacting against the issues exogenous to its life and interests, but it acted also on the basis of its moral suasion and its own understanding of its religious mission, during and beyond the authoritarian era.[91] Fleet and Smith, by comparing two national Churches in their contributions to democratic transition and consolidation, have broadened the issues connected with church and democracy. They point out the changing patterns of church roles during the period of transition and consolidation.

Nonetheless, a few problems remain in the Fleet and Smith exposition. A first inadequacy of their piece is that, like Klaiber, they have not provided an adequate working concept of democracy. They equate democratic consolidation (an aspect of post-authoritarian

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[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Gabriella Montinola, 'Parties and accountability in the Philippines.'
[90] James Putzel, 'Survival of an imperfect democracy in the Philippines,' *Democratization* 6(1) (January 1999), 198-223.
[91] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?...; Robert Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches: a "constructive critical solidarity",' *Pilipinas: a journal of Philippine studies*. No. 13, (Fall 1989), 57-71.

democracy) with the democratisation of 'institutions and practices' that empower and make public officials accountable.[92] While this is not entirely dismissive of civil society actors, it does not do justice to their potential roles vis-à-vis state and society in a democratic context. Second, typical of the pre-transition and transition moments of democratisation, the cases (Peru and Chile) presented by Fleet and Smith do not allow a notable changing view of church-state relations from one of constant conflict with each other to one of critical engagement as evident in some post-authoritarian countries. In a democratising context, it is argued that reforming the State is a decisive actor in democratisation. This is premised on the widely accepted assumption that a strong civil society needs a strong state.[93] And finally, the church-civil society connection remains a lacuna in their analysis. Church-state relations continue to dominate the discourse with very little reference to church-civil society engagement in the task of democratisation.

2.3 Church *ad extra* (the Church's involvement with civil society actors) and democracy building

Earlier it was shown that the relationship between the Catholic Church and civil society is fuzzy. While the Church (stretching from the Vatican to the smallest ecclesial unit with its own logic of governance and sources of moral norms, values, religious identities), can be classified as a supra-state organisation that is distinct from civil society, its associations and movements form part of civil society. Thus it is analytically possible to see the Church's relationship with civil society, despite the overlap. Church *ad extra* provides an important resource in the post-authoritarian setting not only for the Church, but also for civil society particularly in countries that have a significantly influential church presence as in the Philippines. Three modes of church-civil society interaction are proposed here as possible ways by which democratisation could be strengthened.

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[92] Fleet and Smith, *The Catholic Church and democracy in Chile and Peru*,160.
[93] H. Secher Marcussen, 'NGOs, the State and civil society,' *Review of African Political Economy* 69 (1996), 421.

The first mode of interaction concerns the Church's capacity to mobilise civil society actors through the use of religious symbols (including ecclesial pronouncements and statements). In Argentina, Chile and Brazil, not only did the Church erode the moral legitimacy of dictatorial regimes, but, as Klaiber argues, it also conferred upon the pro-democracy forces (e.g., civil society organisations, opposing political parties) some religious legitimation.[94] In this regard, religious symbols (e.g., Sunday Masses and homilies, icons) became a mobilisational resource that emboldened individual believers and organised groups to democratise state and society. In Central and European experience, similar use of religious symbols became a politicised resource for individuals and civil society organisations. In using the icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa of Jasna Góra (a symbol of collective memories of Polish affliction, opposition and victory), members of the Solidarity movement drew immense inspiration and mobilisational capacity.[95]

The second mode of interaction stresses the role of the Church as an animator of civil society forces. Given the Church's relatively high level of public confidence, Fleet and Smith propose that 'the Church's programs and facilities can provide formative, life-sustaining places of gestation, from which repressed social and political groups may emerge revitalized.'[96] Reflecting on the Latin American experience, Edward Cleary suggested (echoed by Fleet and Smith)[97] that the Church could be a 'mediator, moderator, or mentor of democracy.'[98] This point has some bearing on the Church's role as an animator in civil society in a democratic polity. As an animator, it can potentially socialise and mobilise civil society organisations even as it can likewise be animated by the same actors.

A third mode of the Church's interaction with civil society is the former's creative

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[94] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin American*, 7-8.
[95] Casanova, *Public religions in the modern world*, 97-98.
[96] Fleet and Smith, *The Catholic Church and democracy in Chile and Peru*, 290.
[97] Ibid., 281-282.
[98] Edward L. Cleary, 'Conclusion: politics and religion,' in *Conflict and competition: the Latin American Church in a changing environment* eds., Edward L. Cleary and Hannah Stewart-Gambino (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 204.

partnership with the latter in the task of democratisation. In the post-authoritarian context (particularly in countries where the Church played a crucial role in the transition), the Church on its own, despite its vast network of organisational formation, does not have sufficient resources or mobilising capacity, nor does it have the monopoly of moral mandate and constituency to speak and act on behalf of the people on democratic issues. Thus the Church's partnership with civil society organisations appears crucial in delivering democratic outcomes. By virtue of the Church's moral leverage and public confidence in the Philippine setting, it occupies a significant location in society.

Robert Putnam's idea of social capital (trust, norms of reciprocity, and networks of social organisations) is a starting point in clarifying the relationship between the Church and civil society organisations.[99] Social capital enhances collaborative efforts benefiting the parties concerned. 'Networks of civic engagement' (e.g., neighbourhood, associations, cooperatives), in Putnam's view, can bolster not only the economy but also political democracy.[100] Ties that bind the Church and civil society organisations are crucially important in delivering political outcomes in their interventions. Ties make possible creative partnership and division of roles. Nonetheless, it is argued that this relationship must be sustained not merely by means of social ties of mutual trust and confidence cutting across the church-civil society divide, but also through their shared interest in democratisation. The Church's engagement with civil society offers possibilities for alliance formation, organisational pluralism, associational and mobilising functions in view of democracy building. This partnership creates and expands, sustains and strengthens sites of participation and thereby enabling individuals and groups to engage the State and society to democratise. This politicises the notion of social capital which Putnam appears to gloss over. His idea of

[99] Robert Putnam, 'Bowling alone: America's declining social capital,' *Journal of Democracy* 6(1) (1995), 65-78; Robert D. Putnam, *Making democracy work: civic traditions in modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).
[100] Ibid., chapter six.

social capital seems to de-emphasise the political variable. Indeed Putnam's 'networks of civic engagement' appear undifferentiated by power relations, static, and depoliticised.[101]

The three modes of interaction (mobilisation, animation, and partnership) mentioned above are key expressions of the Church's involvement with civil society organisations in democratisation. These have been tried in some transitions to democracy. The Church's relationship with the Solidarity movement in Poland is one such case. While the collaboration between the two actors put up a strong resistance against the communist regime, when Solidarity rose to power in 1989, the partnership became too fragile and fuzzy to yield any substantial democratic outcomes.[102] Arguably, church-civil society partnership can be sustained. The Church can be an important ally in democratisation whose non-participation would greatly whittle down any political outcome.[103] Indeed in post-colonial Philippines, no political transformation has successfully occurred without the participation of the mainline Catholic and Protestant Churches.

2.4 The Church's involvement in citizenship: a pathway to building post-authoritarian democracy

It would appear from the foregoing discussion that Church *ad intra* (hierarchy-laity internal dynamics) and Church *ad extra* (church-civil society interaction) conceptions in themselves do not transform the quality of democracy. They can, however, create participatory spaces within and beyond the Church. In this way, they are likely to increase the influence of the Church as a democratic actor. Post-authoritarian church-civil society partnership including hierarchy-laity interrelation can be strengthened through citizenship formation. To better appreciate this

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[101] John Harriss and Paolo de Renzio, 'An Introductory bibliographic essay' in 'Policy Arena - "Missing link" or analytically missing?: the concept of social capital.' *Journal of International Development* 9(7), (1997), 919-937. See also James Putzel, 'Accounting for the "dark side" of social capital: reading Robert Putnam on democracy,' *Journal of International Development* 9(7) (1997), 939-949.

[102] Casanova, *Public religions in the modern world*, chapter 4.

[103] See G. Sidney Silliman and Lela Garner Noble, 'Citizen movements Philippine Democracy,' in *Organizing for democracy: NGOs, civil society and the Philippine State* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 280-310.

possibility, it is important to turn to the theories on civil society vis-à-vis democracy. There have been attempts to explain civil society's functions in promoting democratisation.[104] A minority opinion in democratic studies has raised scepticisms and levelled criticisms against civil society.[105] Nevertheless, there is need to take a qualified position that civil society could factor in the trajectory of democratisation.

The Church's engagement with civil society vis-à-vis democratic strengthening can be explained initially using the analytical framework offered by Axel Hadenius and Fredrik Uggla.[106] The authors assign to civil society two functions that potentially impact on political democracy: the pluralist and educational functions. The pluralist function refers to 'the distribution of power in society and in political life.'[107] This is attained by organising, networking, bringing groups together to form a multiplicity and plurality of associations to engage the State and society. Michael Foley and Bob Edwards characterise this particular function as the associational and mobilisational aspects of civil society.[108] Organisations in themselves making horizontal linkages on the basis of trust do not necessarily secure democracy, unless 'patterns of civility' (e.g., democratic values) are derived from associating[109] and unless these organisations are mobilised to democratise the State and society.[110]

The function of socialisation draws its inspiration from Alexis de Tocqueville, probably the first to theorise a direct positive correlation between associational life and democracy.

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[104] Ibid., Larry Diamond, 'Rethinking civil society: towards democratic consolidation,'; Michael Walzer, 'The Civil society argument,' in *Theorizing citizenship*, Ronald Beiner, ed., Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 153-174.
[105] Robert Fatton, Jr., 'Africa in the age of democratisation: the limitations of civil society,' *African Studies Review* 38(2), (September 1995), 67-99; Kasfir, *Civil society and democracy in Africa....*
[106] Axel Hadenius and Fredrik Uggla, 'Making civil society work, democratic development: what can states and donors do? *World Development* 24(10), (1996), 1621-1639.
[107] Ibid., 1622.
[108] Foley and Edwards, 'The Paradox of civil society,' 38-52.
[109] Ibid., 39.
[110] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in movement: social movements and contentious politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), see also Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, eds., *Comparative perspectives on social movements: political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Tocqueville insists: 'There are no countries in which (political) associations are more needed to prevent the despotism of faction or the arbitrary power of a prince than those which are democratically constituted.'[111] He notes a thriving democracy in the United States in the 1830s thanks to the proliferation of vibrant associations. He argues strongly that 'In no country in the world has the principle of the association been more successfully used or applied to a greater multitude of objects than in America.'[112] The art of association which Tocqueville refers to as the 'mother of action'[113] is a deeply ingrained process in America where it is initiated in the stage of infancy and reinforced by formal education.[114] This notion linking associational life and democracy is given a contemporary articulation in Robert Putnam's civic community as the matrix of democracy building.[115] One key difference between the two, however, is that while Putnam includes civic community and glosses over political association as the main actor in democracy, Tocqueville links the two, but privileges the latter more than the former in making associational life conducive for democracy.[116] Without these political associations, Putnam's civic community can hardly make any lasting political impact.[117]

Another dimension of the pluralist function is the mobilising character of civil society. The social movement theorists provided some theoretical direction about the mobilising function of civil society. Civil society can exploit political opportunities (factors that encourage engagement), mobilising structures (through organisations, formal or informal alliances) and cultural framings (shared meanings and identities) to widen the political participation of

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[111] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, I, 195.
[112] Ibid., 191.
[113] Ibid., II, 117.
[114] Ibid., I, 195.
[115] Putnam, *Making democracy work: civic traditions in modern Italy*, chapter six.
[116] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, I, 195; II, 115-124.
[117] See Joe Foweraker and Todd Landman, *Citizenship rights and social movements: a comparative and statistical analysis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 239-241; see also Harriss and de Renzio, 'An Introductory bibliographic essay;' Putzel, 'Accounting for the "dark side" of social capital...'

citizenry.[118] Cultural framings mediate political opportunities and mobilising structures.[119] Thus collective action becomes 'a sustained movement,' but 'only when consensus is built around common meanings and identities.'[120] Positive church *ad intra* and *ad extra* dynamics bring about broader consensus within and among actors. Further, civil society's capacity to mobilise presupposes an independent, strong, and 'multiplicity of well-developed organisational networks in society.'[121] This enables civil society to be sensitive to popular demands so that taken as a whole, it can strike a good 'balance between different power centers and interests and opinions.'[122]

Apart from the pluralist function of civil society, Hadenius and Uggla argue for civil society's educational function in the democracy building. By this they mean initiating, socialising, and enabling the citizens to pursue democratic practices and operate within political regulations demanded of a democratic polity.[123] Informed and active citizens are extremely vital in any democratic life. They argue: 'The growth and preservation of democracy depend ultimately on the support this form of government has in the hearts and minds of the people.'[124] The formation of an active citizenry, however, is not limited to formal political education of citizens. Larry Diamond maintains: 'There is no better way of developing the values, skills, and commitments of democratic citizenship than through *direct experience with democracy*, no

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[118] Foley and Edwards, 'The Paradox of civil society,' 39; Sidney Tarrow, *Power in movement: social movements and contentious politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 2nd edition); Doug McAdam, J. D. McCarthy and M. N. Zald, eds., *Comparative perspectives on social movements: political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); see also Adam Michnik, *The Church and the left*, ed. and trans. by David Ost, (Chicago: Univeristy of Chicago Press, 1993).

[119] Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, 'Introduction: opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes – toward a synthetic, comparative perspective on social movements,' in *Comparative perspectives on social movements: political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framing*, Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 5.

[120] Tarrow, *Power in movement....*, 201.

[121] Hadenius and Uggla, 'Making civil society work, democratic development....', 1622.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

matter how imperfect it may be.'[125] Civil society, by virtue of its involvement in democratic practices, provides a fertile ground for the educational experience of people. Nonetheless, Hadenius and Uggla do not specify further what this educational function is and what its outcome will be, apart from participating in democratic activities such as public debates and voting exercise.[126] Although they seem to hint at citizenship education and practice as a way forward to enhance democracy, it has not been sufficiently shown how this can be assumed by civil society and how this ties in with post-authoritarian democracy.

On this point, it can be proposed that the specificity of the pluralist and education functions of civil society as cited by Hadenius and Uggla finds its focus and direction in engaged citizenship. These roles are tightly linked with each other, but citizenship is the centrepiece that makes effective the twin-function of civil society. The pluralist and educational functions of civil society assume their political efficacy insofar they enable people to become active, participative, informed, and competent citizens. Post-authoritarian political regimes, more often than not, have restored their democratic institutions, imperfect though they may be. The exercise of citizenship then becomes a pressing issue in this regard lest such polities may only be rightly called 'democracies without citizenship.'[127] Citizens make up a democracy. Social movements and civil society organisations as such do not democratise state and society unless the members engage themselves in redefining their political identity, make effective demands on the State, induce participation from society, and act in accord with their rights and responsibilities, - the kernel of citizenship.[128] The building of a critical and participative citizenry develops a political culture that privileges democratic values, beliefs, sentiments and in turn allows the people to

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[125] Larry Diamond, *Developing democracy toward consolidation* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 162, italics mine.
[126] Hadenius and Uggla, 'Making civil society work, promoting democratic development....', 1623.
[127] Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, 'The Rule of Law and the underprivileged in Latin America: introduction,' in *The (Un)Rule of Law & the underprivileged in Latin America*, Juan E. Méndez, Guillermo O'Donnell and Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, eds., (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 2.
[128] Walzer, 'The Civil Society argument, 171; Foweraker and Landman, *Citizenship rights and social movements: a comparative and statistical analysis*, 239-243.

become habituated to the democratic ways of proceeding, - an educational function of civil society.[129]

The Church's involvement in citizenship building has thus far not received the attention it deserves in the corpus of literature. During the democratic transition, the Church, albeit uneven in many areas, has been engaged in citizenship education and practice in view of democratisation. Its involvement in human rights advocacies in Chile, Brazil, El Salvador, among others;[130] its engagement in initiating citizenship of indigenous peoples in Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala and Mexico,[131] its participation in electoral system to clip the powers of Pinochet in Chile[132] and the Marcos ouster in the Philippines to name a few; mobilisation of the citizens to resist political tyrannies and military rule; formation of CEBs to mainstream participation --all these demonstrate the Church's potential role in citizenship building.

There are a few crucial elements (expressed as 'emphases' in Chapter One) for a functioning democracy in the post-authoritarian period. These elements include: reforming and building confidence in electoral politics, mainstreaming interest articulation and representation, promoting good governance, defending human rights, instituting the rule of law, and cultivating democratic culture. These areas are not only dimensions of democratisation, but they can also be sites of potential citizenship building.

The first element concerns the building of confidence in, and reform of, regular competitive elections. Electoral contestation as indicated by Schumpter is a necessary condition, although by no means sufficient, for democracy to work.[133] Voting for public officials rather than appointing them distinguishes a democracy from a non-democratic political regime.

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[129] Linz and Stepan 'Towards consolidated democracies'; John Higley and Richard Gunther, *Elites and democratic consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992; Diamond, *Developing democracy toward consolidation,* 163.
[130] Klaiber, *The Church,dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America.*
[131] Deborah J. Yashar, 'Contesting citizenship in indigenous movements and democracy in Latin America, *Comparative Politics* 31(1), (October 1998), 23-43.
[132] Carl E. Meacham, 'The Role of the Chilean Catholic Church in the new Chilean democracy,' *Journal of Church and State* 36(2), (Spring 1994), 277-285-289.
[133] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, socialism and democracy* (London: Unwin, 1965), 269.

Although the act of voting itself does not necessarily lend credibility to democratic institution, the Church does and can promote a voting culture compatible with democracy by exhorting voters to be informed and to vote wisely; cultivating a patterns of electoral civility; by mobilising resources and people to ensure fair, clean, and honest elections; by networking and collaborating with various electoral watchdogs; by keeping watch over newly elected public officials and so on. In the process, an informed citizenry is being constructed. These activities are expressions of Hadenius and Uggla's pluralist and educational functions of civil society, but in this case, the Church with civil society is a key factor. Citizenship, on this note, is not merely the responsibility of voting, but a sustained involvement in electoral reforms. This is an antidote to the uneven playing field in electoral politics generally found in many developing countries. By building, restoring and sustaining public confidence in the electoral institution, the Church participates in strengthening democracy.

Apart from electoral education and mobilisation, the Church as it interacts with civil society, can also provide avenues for interest articulation and representation for the building of post-authoritarian democracy.[134] This makes the church-civil society nexus a 'transmission-belt between state and society.'[135] The presence of this intermediary structure may induce participation of marginalised groups. The formation of interest groups, constituencies of pressing issues such as environment, gender, and peace, is one such expression of this assembly of informed citizens. This very likely creates a venue for denizens to assert their citizenship, one that is participative, enabling, politically informed, responsive and competent in accordance with their rights, duties and obligations.

Good governance is another important element in democratisation since it aims at transparency and accountability of public officials who exercise power and influence over

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[134] Diamond, 'Rethinking civil society..., 8.
[135] White, 'Civil society, democratisation and development (I)....,384.

political institutions and the public. Corruption reduces public confidence not only in government officials but also in the institutions that make democracy possible.[136] Good governance happens when the citizens and institutions are committed to the values of public honesty, integrity, and social responsibility. The Church with its experience of democratic transition can likewise potentially act with civil society as a vigilant group mobilising its citizenry, promoting good governance and strengthening political institutions.

Another important dimension of democracy is the promotion and defence of human rights.[137] Human rights advocacy attempts to restore the primacy of law in the democratic legal framework, although in some cases (e.g., death penalty) it challenges existing laws to expand and safeguard fundamental rights. Laws within the constitutional framework need to be constantly reviewed to enhance democratic performance. An engaged citizenry can serve as a pressure group in asserting the primacy of law when it is favourable to democratisation, but it can equally challenge the law when basic rights are not upheld. The Church in many cases is known to have supported human rights issues during the democratic transition.[138] Many cases of human rights violation have been attributed to the politicised military and the establishment, but post-authoritarian democracy cannot exclude *any* perpetrator of abuses, since the law of a democratic polity must have universal application. This then leads to the importance of laws in democratisation.

The primacy of law over lawlessness, corruption and clientelism can enable democracy to work. In this way, the State and non-state actors are not above the legal framework.[139] The law as enshrined in a democratic constitution facilitates the transition from clientelism to a new

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[136] Mark Robinson, ed., *Corruption and development* (London and Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998).
[137] Guillermo O'Donnell, 'Polyarchies and the (un)rule of Latin America: a partial conclusion,' in *The (un)rule of law & the underprivileged in Latin America* Juan E. Méndez, Guillermo O'Donnell and Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, eds., (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame), 303-337; Jelin and Hershberg, eds., *Constructing democracy: human rights, citizenship, and society in Latin America.*
[138] Cleary, *The Struggle for human rights in Latin America.*
[139] O'Donnell, 'Polyarchies and the (un)rule of Latin America: a partial conclusion,...'; Linz and Stepan, 'Towards consolidated democracies,' 18-20.

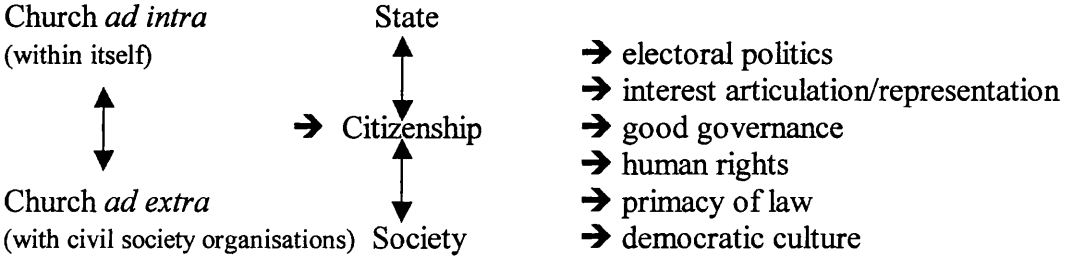
sense of citizenship. Defending a democratic constitution from arbitrary amendments that serve the interests of the ruling elite or purging an existing constitution of its undemocratic tendencies as in the case of the Church's intervention in Chile,[140] enhances the primacy of the law, and by extension the quality of democracy. By mobilising the people to defend their democratic constitution or pressuring the State to reform the constitution along democratic principles, the role of an informed citizenry becomes crucial.

Finally the promotion of a democratic culture is another potential locus of the Church's involvement in post-authoritarian setting. Democratic values such as social participation, political inclusion; attitudinal preference for democracy rather than authoritarianism; habituation to the democratic rules all form part of democratic culture and represent the 'patterns of civility' that can strengthen the citizenry.[141] The Church, by virtue of its relatively high moral confidence, can potentially facilitate and aid the cultivation of a political culture and citizenship, one that creates good prospects for democracy building in the long run.[142]

2.5 Possibilities and limits of the framework

To summarise, the theoretical framework in this study seeks to explain in part, without concealing its deficiencies, how the Church can play its role in democratisation. A little diagram (see Figure 3) may illustrate the main points of the theoretical framework.

Figure 3: The Church, civil society and citizenship in post-authoritarian democracy: a theoretical framework



[140] Meacham, 'The Role of the Chilean Church in the new Chilean democracy.'
[141] Foley and Edwards, 'The Paradox of civil society,' 39.
[142] Diamond, *Developing democracy toward consolidation*, Chapter V.

A few variables have been noted as crucial. First, the internal organisational dynamics (Church *ad intra*) defines the interaction among leaders, between them and their members. This enhances the Church's capacity to socialise and mobilise society for an engagement with the State and society. Second, the Church's interaction (through animation, mobilisation and creative partnership) with civil society organisations (Church *ad extra*) enables both to share and collaborate their functions (pluralist and educational roles in citizenship) vis-à-vis democratic building. The interaction between the two actors is particularly crucial in the Philippine setting where both parties are vital in any democratic impulse or enterprise. Third, engagement in citizenship appears to be a unifying theme that directs the pluralist and educational functions. The dimensions of democracy building are likewise locations of the Church's involvement in citizenship formation: reforming and restoring confidence in electoral politics, institutionalising interest articulation and representation, promoting good governance, human rights advocacy, primacy of law, and enhancing a democratic culture.

There are positive aspects of the theoretical construct proposed. The first positive note is its holistic yet disparate view of the Church as opposed to the notion of the Church as either a monolithic or a fragmented actor. A realistic and critical view of the Church as proposed in the foregoing sees the complexity of the Church's structure as distinct from the uncritical optimism or thoroughgoing pessimism of many writers. A second positive development in the proposed framework is that it encompasses the church-civil society interaction which is another way of looking at the Church's role in democracy other than the often used church-state relations. Direct church-state interaction still figures in the theoretical design, but it is not the main frame of reference. By using this horizontal linkage of the Church, one can examine its engagement in and with civil society seen not only in terms of the democratisation of the State, but also of society. This church-civil society partnership in view of democratisation contains pluralist and educational functions of civil society, both of which are concerned with citizenship building. A

third advantage of the framework is its exploration on citizenship as a window on strengthening democratisation, a relatively new field of interest, for the Church and also for civil society.

One obvious limitation of the framework is its predilection for an actor-oriented approach in explaining the process of democratic building. The structural determinants such as economic, cultural, and political systems; the role of the State, global international support, and other exogenous factors, while no doubt crucial in democratisation, do not figure centrally in the theoretical design. The omission is deliberate for the purposes of this study and in no way suggests their lack of importance. Indeed the combination of both actor-oriented and structural approaches makes a better case in explaining democratisation.[143]

Second, linking church and democracy in the post-authoritarian setting remains a huge minefield in democratic and development studies. The framework attempts to cast a glimpse at a tiny but central problematic in democratic discourse. For instance, the Philippine Church is a lot more complex than the cases can hope to argue. Likewise, Philippine democracy, known to be a problem child in the literature of democratisation,[144] is another area of complexity. Thus the Philippine case needs to be subjected to a comparative analysis to see the points of convergence and divergence with the other cases. This inchoate framework therefore invites more critical investigation on the Church's role in post-authoritarian democracy building.

Finally, by way of a caveat, by examining the contributions of the Philippine Church in democratisation, there is no attempt to conceal its undemocratic impulses or interventions. As indicated in this study, the Church has its own fair share of limitations as a democratic actor. Democracy too offers possibilities, but it has its own inherent constraints.

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[143] Scott Mainwaring, 'Democratic survivability in Latin America,' in *Democracy and its limits: lessons from Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East* Howard Handleman and Mark Tessler, eds. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999, 60.

[144] Mark R. Thompson, 'Off the endangered list: Philippine democratisation in comparative perspective,' *Comparative Politics* 28(2), (1996), 180.

Chapter Three

The Philippine Catholic Church under the authoritarian period: an actor in initiating democracy or acted upon by political exigencies?

'The third wave of the 1970s and 1980s was overwhelmingly a Catholic wave.'
--Samuel Huntington[1]

The next two chapters seek to locate the Philippine Catholic Church during and after the authoritarian period. Although there have been attempts to situate the Philippine Church after Vatican II particularly during the authoritarian period, there is little, if any, explicit consideration of its role in citizenship formation as a pathway to the restoration of democracy in 1986 and beyond. James Kroeger[2] and Pasquale T. Giordano[3] using theological lenses analyse the development of Vatican II's influence on the life of the Philippine Church especially its involvement in the public domain. While succeeding to explain how the Vatican II reforms influenced the Church's social mission, neither linked explicitly its reforms with democracy nor examined the political processes and outcomes arising from the Church's involvement. Thus its explicit connection with democracy building remains largely unattended. Other accounts do not deal explicitly with the Church as a democratic actor. Warren Kinne's treatment of the Mindanao and Sulu Church provides an analysis of the internal conflict within MSPC (the MSPC bishops vs. the lay secretariat), - indeed a case of church *ad intra* breakdown.[4] Dennis Shoesmith notes the cleavages existing within the Catholic Church and how these factored in its response against the authoritarian regime of President Marcos.[5] Robert Youngblood's exposition

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[1] Huntington, *The Third wave...*, 76.
[2] James Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization: a Philippine experience and perspective since Vatican II – 1965-1984* (Roma: Pontifica Universitas Gregoriana, 1985).
[3] Pasquale T. Giordano, Awakening to mission: the Philippine Catholic Church 1965-1981 (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1988).
[4] Warren Kinne, *The Splintered staff: structural deadlock in the Mindanao Church* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1990); a similar analysis is offered by Karl Gaspar, *Readings: on contemporary Mindanao Church realities* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1994).
[5] Dennis Shoesmith, 'The Church,' in *The Philippines after Marcos*, eds. R. J. May and Francisco Nemenzo (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1985), 70-89; Dennis Shoesmith, 'Church and Martial Law in the Philippines: the continuing debate,' *Southeast Asian Affairs* (1979), 246-257.

is an important account of the Church's opposition to the Marcos regime.[6] John J. Carroll[7] extends Youngblood's period of analysis to the post-authoritarian period. These writers typically look at church-state relations and the socio-political involvement of the Church in the macro domain. They are quite aware of the intra church dynamics (e.g., progressives, moderates and conservatives; hierarchy-laity), but church-civil society nexus and engaged citizenship do not occupy a central place in their treatment.

Following Giordano and Kroeger, it is argued that the Church was not simply against the Marcos dictatorship. Rather, it was indeed an actor in democratisation with its own agenda that is to say, citizenship advocacy as informed by Vatican II, Papal social teaching, and by the historical context of that time. It is further argued that the church's *ad intra* (hierarchy-laity interaction) and *ad extra* (church-civil society interaction) dimensions were inchoately at work during the authoritarian period. Church *ad intra* increased lay participation and broadened consensus building within the Church. Church *ad extra* widened the zone of political engagement and enabled the Church along with civil society actors to democratise the State and society. Internal division within the hierarchical leadership during martial law emasculated hierarchy-laity interaction and the Church's engagement with civil society organisations. The consolidation of church positions towards the end of the authoritarian regime was a result of healthy hierarchy-laity relationship and church-civil society linkage that saw action in 1983 leading to the 1986 February Revolution. The Church contributed to the inauguration of democracy by instilling a quality citizenship that confronted the authoritarian regime.

This chapter outlines the trajectory of the Church's religio-political role vis-à-vis democratisation of the State and society during the period of dictatorship. It has three main parts. The first looks broadly at the gradual renewal of the Church's mission and religious identity on the bases of the Papal social encyclicals and Vatican II. The second considers the

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[6] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church....*
[7] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?...

vital church actors in the democratisation of Philippine State and society. The third examines the roles of church actors that initiated the democratic impulse.

3.1 Catholicism in the Philippines: then and now

Catholicism in the Philippines, as in Latin America, is deeply rooted in colonial history. Although Islam came first, the Catholic faith spread rapidly after it was initially introduced in the 16th century by the Spanish *conquistadores* and religious leaders. Under the *Patronato Real de las Indias* system the Church and State jointly engaged in the evangelisation of the colonies under the Spanish monarch.[8] The royal patronage (*patronato real*) meant that the State supported the missionaries, brought them to the Philippines, and provided them with material and financial backing to undertake the mission.[9] In return the Spanish Crown provided the Holy See with a list from which it could choose colonial bishops. Priests appointed by them must be approved by a colonial governor or viceroy. Further, the Spanish Crown examined and approved all ecclesiastical communication to the colonies, and asked clergy to undertake civil functions.[10] Thus Catholicism became the official religion of the establishment. This enabled the Holy See to recognise the claim of the Spanish monarchy to its colonies.[11] In return for this recognition, the monarchy promoted and defended the Catholic faith in its colony. This led to the fusion of church and state powers for centuries, although in some instances the Church challenged state hegemony.

In 1902, the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* [IFI or Philippine Independent Church (PIC)], headed by Archbishop Gregorio Aglipay, broke ranks with the Catholic Church and attracted possibly a fourth of the Catholic population.[12] Protestantism made critical advances when the

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[8] Horacio de la Costa, 'The Priest in Philippine life and society: an historical view,' In 'The Filipino clergy: historical studies and future perspectives,' ed. C. G. Arévalo, *Loyola Papers* 12, (Quezon City: Cardinal Bea Institute for Ecumenical Studies, 1980), 7. In English, the term means 'Royal Patronage of the Indies.'
[9] Ibid., 708.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Pasquale T. Giordano, *Awakening to mission: the Philippine Catholic Church 1965-1981* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1988), 8.
[12] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 109.

Americans took over the Philippines as the new colonial rulers towards the end of the nineteenth century. The proliferation of the *Iglesia ni Cristo* (Church of Christ, INC) and more recently the fundamentalist and evangelical communities has posed a challenge to the dominance of Catholicism and mainline Protestantism (e.g., National Council of Churches in the Philippines) in the country (see Chapter Four).[13] The upsurge of fundamentalist and evangelical churches is a global phenomenon, and one that affected the momentum of democratic currents in Latin America[14] and various parts of Africa.[15] Still, the Catholics remain the vast majority of the population (see further below).

3.1.1 Sources of church renewal: Papal social teaching, Vatican II interacting with historical realities

Contrary to the commonly received knowledge that the Philippine Church only began to become socially aware and responsive after Vatican II, in the 1930s church initiatives were underway to tackle social questions.[16] Propelled by the papal social encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 and *Quadragesimo Anno* ('On Reconstruction of the Social Order') in 1931, the Social Justice Crusade, pioneered by American Jesuits, campaigned to address social issues particularly regarding land redistribution.[17] These Papal social encyclicals interacted with the burning social questions (e.g., Huk rebellion, agrarian issues, socio-economic inequalities) of Philippine society at that time. Although their impact was fragmented, they succeeded in implanting the idea that the Church had a social message.[18]

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[13] Margot Cohen, 'Catholics and fundamentalists fight for the faithful: an unholy row,' *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 27 April 1989, 43 & 45. See also Grace Gorospe-Jamon, 'The El Shaddai Prayer movement: political socialisation in a religious context,' *Philippine Political Science Journal* 20(43), (1999), 83-126.
[14] Brian H. Smith, *Religious politics in Latin America: Pentecostal vs. Catholic* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998).
[15] Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: its public role* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1998).
[16] Wilfredo Fabros, *The Church and its social involvement in the Philippines, 1930-1972*, (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1988).
[17] Ibid., Chapter 1. Pope Leo XIII wrote *Rerum Novarum* (literally meaning 'Of new things') in 1891 while Pope Pius XI penned Quadragesimo Anno (literally means 'In the fortieth year') in 1931.
[18] Ibid., 167.

The post-war period saw the establishment of the Institute of Social Order (ISO) in 1947 led by Jesuit priest Walter Hogan. He and Johnny Tan formed the Federation of Free Workers (FFW) in 1950.[19] In 1953, the Jesuits working in ISO assisted the formation of the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) founded by Attorney Jeremias Montemayor and Fernando Esguerra.[20] These two unions drew immense inspiration from the teaching of *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*.[21] FFW became an alternative union which was not aligned with company unions nor those affiliated with the communist-led Congress of Labour Organisations (CLO).[22] FFF similarly was concerned with the moral and socio-economic welfare of the farmers and the plight of the nation, but over time it would become highly politicised before its cooption by the Marcos government. In both Catholic-inspired organisations, Catholic lay leaders and some members of the clergy were involved principally in the moral formation and socio-economic upliftment of labourers and peasants.

The Church hierarchy's support for FFW and FFF was, however, ambivalent particularly when the issue affected its own interests or those of the elite. Despite FFW's rootedness in the Papal social teaching, the financial and other kinds of assistance from some bishops, and the verbal support of the rights of workers given by Archbishop Rufino J. Santos, Archbishop of Manila, when the same Catholic principles were applied to church establishments, opposition from him and elements of the Philippine Church hierarchy was swift and firm. This was the case in the labour row at the University of Sto. Tomas (UST), the oldest Catholic university in the country run by the Dominicans, and the labour issues in La Loma Catholic cemetery in 1956.[23] The UST union, affiliated with FFW, staged a strike after the labour-management final

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[19] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 167.
[20] Ibid., 122-123.
[21] Fabros, *The Church and its social involvement in the Philippines,* 44-50.
[22] Ibid., 37.
[23] Armando de Jesus, 'The Archdiocese of Manila: 1945-1995,' in *The Archdiocese of Manila: a pilgrimage in time (1565-1999)*, ed. Crisostomo A. Yalung, DD, Vol. 2 (Manila: The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila, 1999), 367.

negotiation failed. Archbishop Santos then moved to forbid Fr. Hogan to write or speak in public regarding social issues in his archdiocese.[24] The Philippine bishops supported by the Papal Nuncio Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi and Catholic Action of the Philippines (CAP), led by lay people, condemned the strike. This caused resentment for some time from the labour sector.[25]

The hierarchy's disengagement from FFW was also evident in FFF. The former led the 'go-home strike' of the *sacadas* (transient sugarcane workers from Antique) in 1959 to protest labour conditions in Negros Island.[26] Sadly, despite the hierarchy's official endorsement of FFF's goals, the Church's support for the FFF-sponsored strike was nil.

FFW and FFF became independent of any linkage with the Church over the long haul. Following the UST strike, the Philippine hierarchy turned inward with hardly any statement regarding socio-economic involvement.[27] Regrettably, FFF's leadership would eventually support the government vision of the New Society during the martial law period.[28] Nevertheless, like many Latin American Churches, the Philippine Church's involvement in public affairs took a decisive turn in the wake of Vatican II (see previous chapter). The transformation that occurred within the Philippine Church was more or less *pari passu* with the global trend. Although it had its peculiar brand of reformation, it was infused subsequently with some elements of Latin American liberation theology, the Filipinisation movement within the Church, and deteriorating socio-political and economic realities.

In a pastoral letter issued on January 13, 1967, the Bishops' Conference (CBCP) desired to sponsor the National Congress for Rural Development (or National Rural Congress) 'to awaken everyone in the country to the crying needs of the rural population.'[29] The National

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[24] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 12.
[25] Fabros, *The Church and its social involvement in the Philippines*, 67-70.
[26] Ibid., 77.
[27] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 125.
[28] Fabros, *The Church and its social involvement in the Philippines*, 45 & 77.
[29] 'Joint pastoral letter of the Philippine Hierarchy on social action and rural development,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1960s/1967-rural_development.html, 21 February 2003.

Rural Congress, inspired by the Papal social encyclical *Populorum Progressio* ('On the development of peoples'), was conducted in Cagayan de Oro City in February 1967 and in Bacolod City in September 1967.[30] Claver notes that this 'was a turning point of crucial importance to the Church of the Philippines.'[31] Bacolod and Malaybalay dioceses refer to the National Rural Congress as a major point of departure in the rise of the local Church's social development programmes (see Chapters Five and Six).

Changes within the Church's pastoral programmes and activities manifestly drew out more explicit lay participation in the Church and greater involvement in the public sphere. The Synod of Bishops in 1971, declared that the new equation of the Church's mission makes the promotion of social justice and social transformation inevitable consequences in one's practice of faith.[32] In this way, there is an inseparable connection between one's faith and the task of liberating the human race from all shackles of oppression such as those inherent in non-democratic and authoritarian regimes. Indeed the practice of faith must address issues that militate against social justice, civil liberties, human development and, by extension, democracy. Some noticeable outcomes arising from the renewal set out by Vatican II included liturgical reforms, the rise of social action programmes, the church leadership's insertion into the lives of the poor, and the burgeoning of lay organisations and movements particularly the BCCs. These changes within the Church, however, were not uniform since internal contradictions of its teaching and practice affected the outcome of its interventions (see also Chapter Four).

In sum, notwithstanding the internal conflicts within the Church, there were initiatives to reform the Philippine Church and make it more responsive to the demands of the times, beginning with programmes in the 1930s. These programmes were grounded in early papal

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[30] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 139.
[31] Claver, 'A history of BCCs: the Philippines.' In *Church of the people: the Basic Christian Community experience in the Philippines*, Gabino A. Mendoza *et al.*, eds. (Manila: Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development, 1988), 19.
[32] Flannery, *Vatican Council II...*, 903.

social teaching and subsequently in Vatican II and post-conciliar documents.[33] These reforms, aligned along the lines of key theological and ecclesiological principles, demonstrate that the Church was not simply reacting to the historical conditions of the time. The Church became a protagonist by projecting its own programme and agenda which were embedded in what it thought would be pertinent Christian principles given the historical context. The Church was not simply shaped by the situation, but was an actor in its own right in Philippine society.

3.1.2 Extent of Catholicism

Catholicism in the Philippines is exceptional in Asia. Until the independence of East Timor, the Philippines for centuries remained the only Catholic nation in the continent. Only two percent of Asia's population are Christians, nearly half of whom are in the Philippines.[34] In the Philippines, the percentage of Catholics relative to the total population ranged from 82% to 84% in the years from 1985 to 1995.[35] The other religious groups include the Protestants (5%), Muslims (4%), PIC (2.6%), and INC (2.5%).[36] In 1985, the nominal count of Catholics was 45,455,421; in 1988, 47,752,369; in 1992, 53,062,612 and in 1995, 57,027,474.[37] This makes the Philippines the third largest national Church in the world after Brazil and Mexico.[38] The church leaders' influence on their members is another story altogether. This can be gleaned from the rate of participation of its members. A preparatory document of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II) notes that only 20% of the Catholic population are catechised, 10% are regular churchgoers and recipients of the sacraments while a mere '2% belong to Church-related

[33] Post-conciliar documents consist of ecclesial pronouncements after Vatican II.
[34] James Kroeger, *Church Truly Alive: journey to the Filipino Revolution*, (Davao City: Mission Studies Institute, 1988), 9.
[35] CBCP Research Office, *1985 to 1995 Statistical profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines* (Manila: CBCP, 1997), 17.
[36] Richard Ulack, 'Republic of the Philippines,' available from http://www.wrad.org/philippines-bio.htm, 10 March 2003.
[37] Ibid., 13.
[38] Kroeger, *Church Truly Alive: journey to the Filipino Revolution*, 9.

affairs.'[39] Thus the document concludes: some 88% of the Catholics are 'unchurched, uninvolved, and untouched by the parish.'[40]

Nevertheless, the Church is not only made up of individual members. It has multiple establishments, organisations and agencies. In 1995, the Philippine Church had a total of 80 ecclesiastical jurisdictions with '16 archdioceses, 50 dioceses, 7 apostolic vicariates and 6 prelatures' and one Military Ordinariate.[41] Catholic schools (primary, secondary and tertiary education) in the Philippines registered a total of 2,069 in 1995 involving a total of 1,628,213 registered students.[42] The number of parishes posted a significant gain from 1,971 to 2,345 parishes or 18.98% rise in the years from 1988 to 1992.[43] This is understandable considering the 11% rise of the Catholic population during the period, high ratio of 'priest-to-Catholic-population' in many dioceses, and increasing numbers of diocesan and religious priests, although not all are based in parishes.[44] In 1995, the number of parishes slightly went up to 2,408 which is a 2.69% increase.[45] To be sure, the increase of parishes did not necessarily mean that the Catholic population was proportionately rising with the general population. From a Catholic population of 83% in 1988, it slowed down to 82% in 1992.[46]

3.2 Actors within the Church and their roles during the authoritarian period

This section cites the key actors within the Church and in Philippine society during the authoritarian period. Further, it identifies broadly the prominent roles they assumed in bringing

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[39] Amado L. Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines: an ecclesiological perspective.* Roma: Pontifica Universitas Gregoriana, Facultas Theologiae, 1995, 57. The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) in 1991 claims that 48% of the Filipinos attend religious services and participate in church affairs and organisations. See Mahar Mangahas and Linda Luz Guerrero, 'Religion in the Philppines: the 1991 ISSP Survey, *SWS Occasional Paper* (May 1992), 4. The figure seems too big on the strength of empirical evidence. See interview with Francisco F. Claver, Former NASSA National Director and former Bishop of Malaybalay Diocese, 13 January 2001, Quezon City.

[40] Cited in Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines....*, 57.

[41] CBCP Research Office, *1985 to 1995 Statistical profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines*, 2.

[42] Ibid., 39.

[43] Ibid., 25.

[44] Ibid., 18-20, 28.

[45] Ibid., 25.

[46] Ibid., 18.

about the inauguration of democracy in Philippine society. They continue to play crucial roles beyond the authoritarian period affecting not only the national scenario but also the local Churches like the Diocese of Bacolod and the Diocese of Malaybalay. These actors included the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the most influential Catholic organisation; its social arm, the National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace (NASSA); the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP), the leaders of religious congregations and orders; the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (MSPC), a regional grouping of Churches in Mindanao and Sulu; the competing ideological groups within the Church; and individual church leaders.

3.2.1 Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)

CBCP started as the Catholic Welfare Organisation (CWO) in 1945.[47] In 1968, CWO was renamed CBCP as the official body of the Philippine hierarchy, headed by one of its member bishops.[48] CBCP was and still is the foremost church organisation which has tremendous influence in the trajectory of the national church's involvement in Philippine politics. In 1997, there were 93 active members covering some 80 ecclesiastical jurisdiction.[49] The CBCP periodically issues pastoral letters and statements responding to key issues pertaining to faith and morals, and those affecting the lives not only of its faithful but also the whole citizenry. It established linkages with the various sectors of society and national religious organisations which shared their interests in addressing issues concerning participation of marginalised groups, peace building, social development, and interreligious dialogue. Bishops-Businessmen Conference (BBC), CBCP-NCCP (National Council of Churches in the Philippines) Joint Peace

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[47] Ruperto C. Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 1945-1995,' *Philippiniana Sacra*, no. 96 (September-December 1997), 395.
[48] Ibid., 424.
[49] 'A History of the CBCP,' available from http://www.rc.net/philippines/cbcp/cbcphist.htm, 15 November 2002. For an excellent analysis of political inclinations of CBCP bishops in the 1970s, see Robert Youngblood, 'Structural imperialism: an analysis of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' *Comparative Political Studies* 15(1), (April 1982), 29-56.

Committee, Bishops-Ulama (Muslim religious leaders) Forum (BUF) are a few partnerships that were set up for these purposes.

3.2.2 National Secretariat for Social Action – Justice and Peace (NASSA)

CBCP established its own social arm as its implementing agency: the National Secretariat for Social Action which later became known as NASSA. NASSA was created in 1966 after the delegates of the Priests' Institute of Social Action (PISA) in 1965 in Hong Kong proposed to the bishops the creation of an episcopal commission and a secretariat on social action.[50] NASSA along with PISA pushed for the appointment of a social action director in each diocese to supervise and coordinate social action programmes.[51] NASSA in turn provided a support system to the different social action centres of the local Churches. Sub-national social action structures subsequently emerged for some time. These were known as the Luzon Secretariat for Social Action (LUSSA), the Visayas Secretariat for Social Action (VISSA), both created in 1974, and the Mindanao-Sulu Secretariat for Social Action (MISSSA) which started much earlier in 1968.[52]

NASSA was reorganised in 1987 when Jesuit bishop Francisco F. Claver took over as its national director amid reports that it was re-channelling funds to the underground movement and being infiltrated by elements in the Left. This was an unfortunate episode which betrayed an acute hierarchy-lay chasm. Although the bishops never cast judgment regarding the reports, they took preventive measures making the reoccurrence of such a charge unlikely.[53]

NASSA is more than just a secretariat since it was registered in Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) as a non-profit organisation in the post-authoritarian period. NASSA was one of the major convenors in the formation of the Caucus of Development NGO Networks

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[50] *NASSA News*, 'Social Action Centers in the Philippines helping the poor become more human,' XXIII(3), (May-June 1991), 6.
[51] Luis B. Gorgonio, '30 years on the job: NASSA has made a difference,' *NASSA News* XXIV(1), (January-February 1996), 4.
[52] Ralph Salazar and Sophie Bodegon, 'Subsidiarity and participation: the regional secretariats,' in *Of joys and hopes, of griefs and anxieties: fifteen years of NASSA, 1966-1981* (Manila: NASSA, n.d.), 67.
[53] Francisco F. Claver, 'Some clarification on NASSA,' n.d.

(CODE-NGO) in 1988, the largest coalition of NGO networks in the Philippines.[54] In times of issue advocacy of national scale, NASSA, with the approval of the local bishops, linked up and mobilised the different social action centres of the dioceses nationwide.

3.2.3 Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP)

The AMRSP is a joint association of two groups: the Association of Major Religious Superiors of Men in the Philippines (AMRSMP) and the Association of Major Religious Superiors of Women in the Philippines (AMRSWP) which were created in 1955 and 1957 respectively.[55] Some 200 female and 60 male religious congregations and orders of uneven sizes compose the AMRSP.[56] At the outset of the authoritarian period, the AMRSP leadership, pursued a more activist stance with regard to martial law than the generally cautious CBCP.[57] Official positions as regards pressing political and social issues coming from both parties were sometimes causing tensions between the two.

The AMRSP not only made statements on major issues. It initiated programmes and organisations. In 1969, the AMRSP established the Rural Missionaries (RM). In the 1974 Joint convention of AMRSP, commissions were created that included the Task Force Detainees (TFD), a well-known human rights group.[58] Other commissions included the Task Force Data Gathering (TFDG), Task Force on Urban Conscientisation (TFUC), Task Force for the Orientation of Church Personnel (TFOCP) and Committee on Education or later known as Education Forum.[59] In 1977, the Urban Missionaries (UM) was created to address issues of the labour sector. The presence and involvement of hundreds of foreign missionaries who were

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[54] Antonio F. Moreno, 'The Politics and participation of NGOs in Philippine democratic consolidation: evidence from the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO),' M. Phil. Thesis, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom, 31 August 1999, 39-41.
[55] Cres Lucero, 'Brief history of the Association of Major Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP),' in *AMRSP 25th Year Souvenir Book*, eds., Pedro Arquilla *et al.*, 1996.
[56] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines: an ecclesiological perspective*, 62.
[57] Shoesmith, 'The Church,' 74.
[58] Lucero, 'Brief history of the Association of Major Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP).'
[59] Ibid.

members of different religious orders and congregations made it possible for them to draw on international advocacy support, media exposure abroad, and even financial backing for their own local projects.[60] Even before martial law was declared, many religious (priests, brothers and sisters) were already socially and politically involved in the organisation of labourers, farmers, urban poor and other marginalised sectors of Philippine society. The first religious priests to be arrested in 1972, after the declaration of martial law were Fr. Daniel Mac Laughlin MM (Maryknoll Missionaries), Fr. Vincent Cullen SJ (Society of Jesus), Fr. Cornelio Lagerway MSC (Missionary of the Sacred Heart), Fr. John Peterson OFM (Order of Friars Minor), and Fr. Bruno Hicks OFM.[61]

3.2.4 Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (MSPC)

The MSPC was formed in 1971 to respond to the concerns and issues common to the Churches in Mindanao and Sulu, the youngest of all the regional Churches. The Diocese of Malaybalay was and still is a crucial member of this conference. Of particular concern in the MSPC were Muslim-Christian dialogue, the tribal (indigenous peoples) apostolate and BECs.[62] A board and a secretariat were created to implement the directives set out by the conference in between triennial meetings. The MSPC was not only the first to introduce BCCs in the Philippines. It was also instrumental in the proliferation of BECs putting Mindanao way ahead in the BCC/BEC movement compared with its regional counterparts in Visayas and Luzon.[63]

In 1976, five conservative bishops wrote a letter dissociating themselves from the MSPC as suspicions were rife that it was infiltrated and influenced by the underground Left. There were attempts to save the conference, but the tension took a serious turn in the 1980s. Issues ranging from one's understanding of ecclesiology, organisational set-up and ideological alliances

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[60] Shoesmith, 'The Church,' 74.
[61] Lucero, 'Brief history of the Association of Major Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP).'
[62] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines: an ecclesiological perspective*, 64.
[63] Ibid., 86; Gaspar, *Readings*....

prompted the bishops to dissociate themselves from the MSPC board and the secretariat in 1982.[64] The bishops felt that the MSPC secretariat and the board were pushing their own people's church ecclesiology, and increasingly becoming autonomous and politicised by the Left.[65] On the other hand, the board and the secretariat charged that the bishops were uncomfortable with greater lay participation and autonomy over which they had very little control.[66] In 1983, two MSPCs were convened: one by the bishops and the other by the board and the secretariat. The MSPC board decided to rename the body to Mindanao Interfaith People's Conference (MIPC) whereas the bishops retained the name MSPC which continued to have triennial meetings.[67] The withdrawal of the more activist elements of the MSPC board and secretariat weakened momentarily MSPC's socio-political involvement. The split indicated a sad moment in hierarchy-laity relationship.

3.2.5 Ideological cleavages within the Church

Divisions within the Church were quite pronounced during the martial law years. Depending on one's attitudes with regard to martial law and ecclesiological preferences, bishops could be classified as conservative, moderate or progressive.[68] In 1979, 46 bishops were classified as conservatives, 18 moderates, and 15 progressives.[69] The conservatives were generally supportive of martial law and hesitant to involve the church in temporal affairs because of its religious mission. The moderates were described as critical of government policy that threatened the collective interests of the Church but ambivalent with regard to martial law. They were influenced by the reforms of Vatican II but cautious about the Church's political involvement. The progressives were critical of martial law and supportive of groups that struggled for political

[64] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 91-93. For a more detailed account see also Gaspar, *Readings....*; Kinne, *The Splintered staff....*
[65] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines...*, 64.
[66] Gaspar, *Readings....*
[67] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines...*, 64.
[68] Youngblood, 'Structural imperialism...,' 35-36.
[69] Ibid., 40.

liberation.[70] Political and ecclesiological cleavages in the Church were also visible among organised groups and parties. These politically oriented groups were also actors within the Church and in the national arena. The groups aligned with the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front-New People's Army (CPP-NDF-NPA) were the most organised and extensive ideological group that offered a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist framework for social transformation.[71] NDF was the united front of which the CPP was, and still is, the leading element, and the NPA was the armed sector.[72] Some priests, religious and lay people actively collaborated with the forces of the CPP-NDF-NPA. Cadres and sympathisers of this political movement were called 'natdems' as they espoused the national democracy programme. Led by Christian activists such as Fr. Edificio de la Torre, Fr. Zakarias Agatep and Fr. Luis Jalandoni, many priests, nuns and other members of religious congregations joined the Christians for National Liberation (CNL), an NDF affiliate.[73] CNL became the 'church sector' in the underground Left which was engaged in the mobilisation of church personnel and resources in aid of the armed revolution waged by the revolutionary Left, and in the transformation of Churches around national democratic principles.[74] David Wurfel estimates that some '2 to 3 percent of priests and nuns were committed to the NDF.'[75] CNL's membership surged from 1,500 before the February 1986 uprising to 4,000 during the Aquino period.[76] The crisis in the Left in 1990s leading to the conflict between the RJs (rejectionist camp) and the RAs

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[70] Ibid., 35-36
[71] Joel Rocamora, *Breaking through: the struggle within the Communist Party of the Philippines* (Pasig: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2001), 20-21.
[72] Ibid., Chapter 5.
[73] Ibid., 14.
[74] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines...*, 66.
[75] David Wurfel, *Filipino politics: development and decay* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1988), 279.
[76] Wilfrido V. Villacorta, 'Ideological orientation of political forces in the Aquino era,' In *Economy and politics in the Philippines under Corazon Aquino*, ed. Bernhard Dahm (Hamburg: Institut für Asienkunde; 1991), 166.

(reaffirmist camp)[77] triggered a split within the revolutionary movement including CNL. As a result, CNL split into three factions while other members were demoralised and left.[78]

Other Christian activists while committed to social transformation and justice, advanced an alternative ideology built around social democratic principles leading to a democratic socialist society. These activists had a party, namely, *Partido Demokratikong-Sosyalista ng Pilipinas* (PDSP, Democratic Socialist Party of the Philippines) with a small band of armed cadres called *Sandigan.*[79] Proponents of this political group were called 'socdems' because of their adherence to social democracy. The socdems, although initially open to an armed component in their struggle, relinquished the means and adopted a militant but non-violent approach to political and social change.[80] They were much smaller and less organised compared with the natdems. They were vigorously anti-communist, but committed to social justice and political transformation. They saw themselves as an alternative force that tried to parallel the CPP-NDF-NPA. Like the natdems, they splintered into factions after the fall of Marcos. In the post-authoritarian period, the *Pandayan para sa Sosyalistang Pilipinas* (Collective for a Socialist Philippines) emerged as a significant force within the democratic socialist formation.

Contestations between the natdems and socdems were evident not only in politicised secular groups but also in the formation of church organisations.[81] Sympathisers or members in both camps came from various segments of the Church: lay leaders, seminarians, religious nuns and priests, and bishops. Both groups subtly vied in occupying key establishments and positions

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[77] The rejectionists (RJs) opposed the tenets of the CPP (particularly on the means of the revolutionary struggle) as espoused by José Maria Sison while the reaffirmists (RAs) basically adhered to his line of thought. Factions within the NDF likewise emerged leading other NDF affiliates to break away from the movement. See Rocamora *Breaking through: the struggle within the Communist Party of the Philippines*; Patricio N. Abinales, ed. *The Revolution falters: the Left in Philippine politics after 1986.* (Ithaca, New York: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1996.

[78] Rocamora, *Breaking through...*, Chapter 3.

[79] Mark Richard Thompson, 'Searching for a strategy: the traditional opposition to Marcos and the transition to democracy in the Philippines,' Vols. I & II, Ph. D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1991, 231-234.

[80] Wurfel, *Filipino politics....*, 217-218.

[81] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 81-83; Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines...*, 65-67.

of influence within the Church. Both competed in recruiting members and sympathisers within the Church. Both groups, however, were not monolithic and had internal rifts within their ranks which eventually caused splits in both camps. The influence and struggle of both ideological groups are reflected in the narratives of the Diocese of Bacolod and Diocese of Malaybalay.

The natdems and the socdems were not the only ideological groups within the Church. But compared with the ring-of-centre liberal democrats, independent liberals and other right-wing groups (e.g., the Opus Dei), they had a more rigorous social analysis of the NSS ideology, more politicised programme of action, and more organised participation from the grassroots. These ideological groups engaged, critically or collaboratively, with church actors, agencies and leadership in addressing issues concerning democratisation. These church actors (the CBCP, NASSA, AMRSP, MSPC) along with individual church leaders have influenced the Philippine Catholic Church in the critical moments of democratisation.

3.2.6 Key Church leaders

Apart from church organisations which have helped to define the nature of church involvement in democratisation, a few among many church leaders have likewise been instrumental. One key leader who has undoubtedly and persistently influenced the direction of Philippine democracy is Jaime Cardinal L. Sin, who has led the Archdiocese of Manila since 1974. Since the seat of state power is in Manila, the Archdiocese of Manila has a privileged location. Historically, Manila determines a good deal of the country's political life, despite efforts towards political and ecclesial decentralisation. Cardinal Sin's influential leadership in the Archdiocese of Manila for nearly three decades now proved vital in the Church's commitment to democratisation. Cardinal Sin is the only prelate in the world who has engaged with, either critically or collaboratively, five successive heads of the government during his episcopacy: Ferdinand E. Marcos (1965-1986), Corazon C. Aquino (1986-1992), Fidel V. Ramos (1992-1998), Joseph E. Estrada (1998-2001) and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (ongoing). Arguably, Cardinal Sin is a principal church actor in

the many key moments of Philippine democratic transition and survival. Of his involvement during the Marcos years of dictatorship, Huntington writes: 'Cardinal Sin may have played a more active and more powerful role in bringing about the end of a regime (Marcos government) and a change in national political leadership than any Catholic prelate since the seventeenth century.'[82]

Other influential bishops during the authoritarian period include Nobel Peace nominee Antonio Y. Fortich, former bishop of the Diocese of Bacolod; Bp. Julio X. Labayen OCD, former NASSA Executive Director and the resident bishop of the Prelature of Infanta; Bp. Francisco F. Claver SJ, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Malaybalay and former NASSA Executive Director; and Manila Auxiliary Bishop Teodoro D. Bacani. Evidently as this chapter unfolds, various priests, religious and lay leaders figure as significant individuals whose involvement helped to push the Catholic Church forward in restoring and rebuilding democracy.

3.3 Church roles in democratisation

The roles of CBCP during the authoritarian period generally evolved from adaptation and ambivalence with regard to the *status quo* to outright active resistance. The evolving roles were shaped by the Church's struggle to renew itself along the lines of Catholic social teaching and Vatican II principles. These principles were appropriated to respond to escalating state repression engendering political and economic decay, human rights abuses particularly of church personnel and establishments, and a growing sense of patriotism and militancy in the protest movement. Gradually, the Church assumed a new concept and practice of citizenship which would persist beyond the authoritarian period.

[82] Huntington, *The Third wave...*, 84.

3.3.1 De-legitimation of the National Security State (NSS) ideology

One significant contribution of the Catholic Church in Philippine democratisation was the de-legitimation of the NSS ideology of the Marcos government. When martial law was promulgated on September 21, 1972,[83] an authoritarian State emerged and legitimised by the 1973 Constitution. This form of government became known as 'constitutional authoritarianism.' The NSS ideology with extensive backing from US foreign policy was extracted from the Latin American experience.[84] This shifted profoundly the role of the military from external defence to internal security, from being largely professional to being politicised.[85] A New Society's slogan captured the core of the NSS ideology: '*Sa ika-uunlad ng bayan, disiplina ang kailangan*' (for the progress of the country, discipline is needed). In the name of national security, discipline was exacted from the citizenry, civil liberties were suspended, and thus violation of human rights became rampant. 'Subversion' was understood by authorities as 'Anybody who goes against the Government or who tries to convince people to go against the Government...,'[86] so that political dissent was not possible without the risk of detention, torture, disappearance, and, in many cases, death.[87] Thus the military rule effectively suppressed civilian supremacy. Apart from being enforcers of martial law, the military implemented government policy and in some instances adjudicated cases of the accused in military tribunals.[88] They determined the standard of media censorship and were assigned in some key positions in the government.[89] Owing to US military assistance, the military budget rose from 0.77% of the national budget at the inception of martial

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[83] The date of Proclamation 1081 (Declaration of Martial Law) is actually September 23, 1972 but this was promulgated two days earlier (See Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' 426).
[84] Gretchen Casper, *Fragile democracies: the legacies of authoritarian rule* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995), 30-39.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Statement is attributed to Minister of National Defence Juan Ponce Enrile in a BBC documentary in 1977. Cited in Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church*, 140.
[87] Ibid., 40, Chapter 6.
[88] Rocamora, *Breaking through*, 54.
[89] Ibid.

law to some 8.66% in 1986.[90] Military personnel and logistics expanded exponentially, nearly doubling in size in the first three years of martial law and doubling again in the following decade.[91] Although martial law was formally lifted in 1981, excessive powers of President Marcos effectively curbed any meaningful legal opposition to the State.

The Church hierarchy's initial position regarding martial law was one of cautious acceptance that masked internal division. Five days after its declaration, the Administrative Council of CBCP, while cautioning the government to respect human dignity, exhorted the people 'to remain calm and law-abiding.'[92] Soon cracks within the Church position surfaced. Shortly after the CBCP statement, 17 bishops and 17 members of AMRSP issued their statement of concern against possible state abuses and sought for the lifting of martial law, not for years but within months.[93] The absence or lack of mass protest against martial law in the beginning indicated that the people as a whole likewise tolerated it.[94] After a year of martial law, '22 Catholic priests and nuns as well as hundreds of laymen had been arrested,' a telling sign that the Church was under state repression.[95] In 1973, the bishops had their first meeting after martial law was declared. An outcome of this meeting was the creation of the Church-Military Liaison Committee (CMLC) the following year.[96] CMLC was an attempt to assist and settle cases of church people who were suspected of subversive activities in the eyes of the military. Individual bishops (conservatives, moderates and progressives) remained sharply divided regarding martial law.

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[90] Ibid.
[91] Eva-Lotta E. Hedman and John Sidel, *Philippine politics and society in the twentieth century: colonial legacies, post-colonial trajectories* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 46-47.
[92] 'Statement of the CBCP Administrative Council on Martial Law,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1970s/1972-martial_law.html, 21 February 2003.
[93] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 19.
[94] Karl D. Jackson, 'The Philippines: the search for a suitable democratic solution, 1946-1986,' in *Democracy in developing countries: Asia,* eds. Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymour Lipset, Vol. 3, (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishing Inc., 1989), 244.
[95] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 176.
[96] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' 427.

Pastoral Letters of the CBCP from 1972 to 1975 plainly showed a cautious hierarchical leadership which neither categorically denounced nor endorsed martial law.[97] The July 1973 CBCP statement ('Evangelisation and Development') was deeply cognisant of the Philippine social problems and called for more integral development without manifesting its opposition with regard to martial law.[98] The CBCP Lenten Pastoral Letter in 1975 on *Alay Kapwa* (Offering to People) stressed social responsibility to the poor as part of the practice of faith.[99]

The impact of CBCP statements was greatly impaired by deep cleavages among its members. The Church's position as regards the 1976 referendum-plebiscite was acutely divided between the conservatives led by Julio Cardinal Rosales of the Archdiocese of Cebu who advocated participation and 14 progressive bishops along with the AMRSP leadership who called for boycott.[100] On November 24, 1976, 17 bishops in an unsent letter '*Ut omnes unum sint*' ('That they may be one') reacted to a Roman letter criticising AMRSP and calling the bishops to assert their leadership.[101] In response to their letter, Archbishops Antonio Mabutas and Francisco Cruces penned '*Et veritas liberabit vos*' ('And the truth shall set you free') which maintained conservative thinking.[102] Deep division within the CBCP meant that the hierarchy's position was at best ambivalent.

In response to the political manipulation of the 1976 referendum, the CBCP Administrative Council denounced its outcome claiming that it was designed to perpetuate Marcos' presidency during martial law.[103] With relative success of the boycott campaign, a spate of military assaults on the Church ensued: deportation of two foreign priests (Fr. Edward Gerlock MM and Fr. Albert Booms PIME); closure of Catholic radio stations in Tagum and

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[97] Ibid., 428.
[98] Giordano, *Awakening to mission...*, 42-43.
[99] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines'..., 428.
[100] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 192-193.
[101] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 195.
[102] Ibid., 196.
[103] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines'..., 428.

Malaybalay; termination of two Catholic publications, *The Communicator* and *Signs of the Times*, an AMRSP newsletter; and detention of some 70 lay leaders in a Mindanao mission district run by the Maryknoller Missionaries.[104]

Sustained persecutions of the Church marked the beginning of the consolidation of the critical position of its leadership. The CBCP statement ('The Bond of Love in Proclaiming the Good News') in January 1977 endorsed the liberationist approach to social change and was explicitly critical of the excesses of martial law.[105] From 1977 to 1981, during the CBCP presidency of Cardinal Sin, CBCP's leadership adopted 'critical collaboration' as its attitude with regard to the authoritarian State.[106] The CBCP criticised martial law particularly when injustices were done by the regime, but otherwise it generally tolerated the State. Over time, however, there was more criticism than collaboration.[107] On July 5, 1979, Cardinal Sin called for the abolition of martial law and the resignation of Marcos.[108] In October, the Manila Synod approved unanimously the lifting of martial law as soon as possible.[109] President Marcos, roughly a month before the Pope John Paul II's first visit to the Philippines from February 18 to 22, 1981, 'lifted' martial law ostensibly to impress upon the Pope a changing political climate and ease the escalating church-state tension. [110] Marcos apparently acted against the advice of President Reagan who cautioned the government about lifting martial law at that time.[111]

The CBCP statement on January 27, 1984, in anticipating the May 14, 1984 Batasang Pambansa (National Assembly) election, underscored the need to respect the citizens' right not to vote if this was 'contrary to the dictates of conscience.'[112] This position clearly veered away

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[104] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization*..., 196.
[105] Giordano, *Awakening to mission* ..., *42*-43
[106] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines'..., 429.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization*..., 214.
[109] Ibid., 215.
[110] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines'..., 430.
[111] Wurfel, *Flipino politics*..., 247-248.
[112] 'The 1984 Plebiscite and elections: a statement of the Administrative Council of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1980s/1984-plebiscite_elections.html, from 21 February 2003.

from CBCP's September 1975 statement encouraging the citizens to participate in the referendum.[113] This betrays increasing opposition of the CBCP as regards the moral legitimacy of the authoritarian regime. Still, the CBCP did not advocate boycott nor did it endorse participation, while AMRSP campaigned for boycott.[114]

The most important church statement that undermined greatly the State's legitimacy was the CBCP collegial statement on the 1986 snap presidential polls held on February 7. The bishops met in an emergency session on February 13, 1986. Pressures were coming from the government (through First Lady Imelda Marcos) not to release the statement, and from the Papal Nuncio Archbishop Bruno Torpigliani and Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli not to issue the statement before Marcos was officially proclaimed by the Marcos-dominated *Batasang Pambansa* (National Assembly).[115] The bishops went on to release their statement on February 14. Claver claims that statement made history when for the first time the Church 'declared for a revolution *before*, not after, the fact.'[116] The CBCP statement, the first one among the national organisations, exposed the illegitimacy of the Marcos government.

> In our considered judgment, the polls were unparalleled in the fraudulence of their conduct.... According to moral principles, *a government that assumes or retains power through fraudulent means has no moral basis*....We therefore ask every loyal member of the Church, every community of faithful, *to form their judgment about the February 7 polls*. And if in faith they see things as we the bishops do, we must come together and discern what appropriate actions to take that will be according to the mind of Christ.[117]

In this statement, the bishops were not so much playing partisan politics as acting as a moral centre challenging the people to evaluate the situation for themselves and come up with their

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[113] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 194-195.
[114] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 197.
[115] Francisco F. Claver, 'The Church and revolution: the Philippine solution (Part I),' *America* (3 May 1986), 356-359. For more details see Robert Youngblood 'The Corazon Aquino "miracle" and the Philippine Churches,' Draft copy prepared for the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, April 9-12, 1987, Boston, Massachusetts, and for a conference in honor of Russel H. Fifield at the 25th anniversary of the Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, April 25, 1987, 12.
[116] Claver, 'The Church and revolution: the Philippine solution (Part I),' 358.
[117] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines: Letters and statements, 1984-1990*, (Manila: CBCP, 1990), 61-63, emphases mine.

own decision. The CBCP defined the gravity of fraud and the moral illegitimacy of the Marcos government without imposing upon the people their collective opinion or giving any directive as to what course of action to take. Instead, they invited the people to form their own judgment. If their reading agreed with that of the bishops, then they should 'come together and discern,' and act.[118] Clearly, they were speaking not *above* the people, but discerning *with* them on what appropriate actions should be taken.[119] The bishops then insisted that they should 'pray together, reason together, decide together, act together, always to the end that the truth prevail, that the will of the people be fully respected.'[120] This was an invitation to hierarchy-laity interaction (church *ad intra*) that enabled participation and involvement of the Church in its entirety.

The people had long lost confidence in the Marcos government. The CBCP articulated their sentiments by declaring that its governance had 'no moral basis.' The National Council of Churches of the Philippines (NCCP), an aggregation of Protestant Churches, also issued a statement, similar to that of CBCP, but it did not have as much impact.[121] The CBCP statement became the opening salvo of massive post-electoral protests, and boycott campaigns of enormous scale against Marcos crony companies until the events in the February 1986 revolution.

By speaking boldly against the illegitimacy of the State, the Church was trying to accomplish its mission as indicated by the Catholic social teaching and Vatican II. The Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes*, for instance, privileged 'the protection of human dignity' at the heart of the social ministry of the Church.[122] The massive fraud and violence that marred the 1986 elections clearly militated against human liberty and dignity, and the values enshrined by the social teaching of the Church and Vatican II. Perhaps, were it not for these theological

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[118] Ibid.
[119] John J. Carroll, 'Church and State: the light of the Gospel on public issues,' in *Duet for EDSA: looking back, looking forward, 1996*, ed. Lorna Kalaw-Tirol (Manila: Foundations for worldwide People Power Inc., 1995), 17.
[120] CBCP, *Letters and statements,* 63.
[121] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 37.
[122] J. Bryan Hehir, Conflict, change, and collaboration,' in *Christianity and democracy in global context*, ed. John Witte, Jr., (Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westerview Press, 1993), 23.

principles interacting with social and political realities and the renewal that was happening within the universal and Philippine Church, the hierarchy would not have reached a broader consensus than they had done in their February 1986 statement.

3.3.2 Defence and advocacy of human rights

Increasing militarisation, illegal detention of 'subversives', widespread use of torture and rising cases of 'salvaging' (extrajudicial killing of 'subversives') made human rights violations a sore issue in church-state relations. A year after the imposition of martial law, the Church leadership and organisations made some attempts to safeguard human rights. NASSA helped to create CMLC in 1973 to address the military-church conflict at the national level. It formed the diocesan-based Citizens' Committee for Justice and Peace to keep watch on the violations of human rights at the local level.[123] Reacting to reports of massive illegal detentions, the CBCP endorsed an AMRSP-sponsored nationwide survey on the effects of martial law.[124] Contrary to the unequivocal claim of President Marcos in December 1974 that 'no one, but no one has been tortured,'[125] the 1973 AMRSP report disclosed a lack of documentation about the extent of the illegal detention, extensive use of torture, and surveillance of families and relatives of the detainees.[126] These concerns led to the creation of TFD along with the Task Force Data Gathering (TFDG) in 1974 to gather and document cases of human rights offences, both under the auspices of AMRSP.[127] In setting up TFD and TFDG, some CNL personalities like Fr. Edicio de la Torre SVD, Fr. Carlos Tayag and Gerardo Bulatao played significant roles.[128] The leadership of Sr. Mariani Dimaranan SFIC was crucial in TFD's expansion and organisation.[129]

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[123] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 84.
[124] Gerard Clarke, 'Human rights non-governmental organisations in the Philippines: a case study of Task Force Detainees,' in *NGOs, civil society, and the Philippines: organizing for democracy*, eds. G. Sidney Silliman and Lela Garner Noble (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University, 1998), 160.
[125] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 51.
[126] Clarke, 'Human rights non-governmental organisations in the Philippines..., 160.
[127] Ibid., 160-161.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid., 161.

In the same year it was established, TFD formed a partnership with the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), founded by former Senator José Diokno.[130] By 1993, TFD had offices and staff in 69 out of 72 provinces in the Philippines.[131] Arguably, TFD became 'the largest human rights NGO both in the Philippines and in the developing world as a whole.'[132] TFD's initial goals were material and financial provisions to detainees and their families; legal assistance to suspects; advocacy against the use of torture; and documentation and information dissemination about human rights condition.[133] TFD's documentation indicates that 30,000 political arrests were made within weeks of the declaration of martial law and 75,000 political incarcerations were reported when authoritarian rule was formally lifted in 1981. By end of the Marcos regime in 1986, some 15,989 were detained for political reasons.[134] During the Marcos regime then, a total of 21,883 political arrests, 2,491 'salvagings' and 709 disappearances were reported.[135] The documentation proved useful not only for the political education and mobilisation of the people and church authorities, but also for international exposure, pressure and support for human rights advocacy. However, increased CPP influence in TFD in the 1970s and 1980s weakened its independent character and deepened divisions within the organisation.[136] By and large, TFD became more engaged in cases which were aligned with or sympathetic to the national democratic movement and thus alienated those human rights victims outside of the movement. TFD eventually diminished in strength and number following the split in the underground Left in 1993.[137]

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[130] Ibid., 157.
[131] Ibid., 159.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 159.
[134] G. Sidney Silliman, 'Human rights and the transition to democracy,' in *Patterns of power and politics in the Philippines: implications for development*, eds. James F. Eder and Robert L. Youngblood (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona State University, Program for Southeast Asian Studies, 1994), 106-107.
[135] Ibid., 107.
[136] Clarke, 'Human rights non-governmental organisations in the Philippines..., 163.
[137] Ibid., 173-174.

Defence of human rights was a priority concern of the Catholic bishops during the martial law regime. This issue became much more acute when military harassments included church people and establishments. Persistent military assaults on church establishments and other violations of the CMLC terms of agreement led the Catholic bishops to disengage from it in January 1983.[138] It is said that from 1972 to 1984, 'at least twenty-two major military raids on church (including Protestant) institutions' were executed.[139] These military raids betrayed rampant human rights abuses, thus straining irrevocably church-state relations.

The Philippine hierarchy's commitment to human rights was evident in the statements it made to promote its cause. The CBCP statement on October 7, 1979 ('Exhortation Against Violence') raised concerns about the rise of militarisation and violence.[140] In this pastoral letter, some conservative bishops like Archbishop Antonio Mabutas, joined the clamour against escalating and persistent military atrocities.[141] The Church's involvement in human rights stemmed not just because it became increasingly an object of state abuses. Rather, the Church, in keeping once again with the Catholic social thought and Vatican II, had to denounce human rights violations and uphold the dignity of the human person. For this reason, the Church had to condemn equally violations of human rights not only of the military and the government, but also the use of terror by the armed Left.

Nonetheless, it took some time for the Church to condemn the violence perpetrated by the Left. Pope John Paul II in his February 1981 visit admonished the government to uphold human rights and be mindful of the poor and at the same time he urged the Church people not to be part of the revolutionary struggle of the Left.[142] MSPC V followed the position of the Pope by unequivocally condemning human rights abuses committed by the Marcos repressive State and

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[138] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' 431.
[139] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 114 and Chapter 5.
[140] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' 429.
[141] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 162.
[142] *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 'Messge of John Paul II on the occasion of his visit to Bacolod City,' Vol 73 (1981), 376.

the use of intimidation and terrorism by the underground movement: 'We strongly condemn the abuses against human rights by both Right and Left: the repression of basic freedoms, arbitrary arrests, searches, detentions, torture of people, hamletting,[143] abuses, 'salvaging' and liquidations.'[144]

On July 11, 1984, a CBCP pastoral letter ('Let there be life') condemned 'salvagings' and sweeping executions perpetrated by both the military, the para-military forces and the revolutionary Left.[145] Also criticised were the continued deployment of so-called 'secret marshals' who could execute enemies of the State and the prerogative of President Marcos to exercise martial law powers by virtue of Amendment 6 in the 1973 Constitution.[146] Amendment 6 provided constitutional backing to the notorious Presidential Commitment Order (PCO) which replaced the nefarious Arrest, Search and Seizure Order (ASSO) and the Preventive Detention Action (PDA).[147] These presidential prerogatives perpetuated illegal detention practices and human rights abuses making the 'lifting' of martial law futile. The CBCP unambiguously denounced these presidential prerogatives as immoral.[148]

'Let there be life' was followed up by another CBCP letter ('Message to the people of God on terrorism') on July 8, 1985 condemning both Right and Left forces for human rights abuses and the use of cultist sects for counter-insurgency purposes.[149] Further, it called for the reorganisation, if not dismantling, of the Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF), a para-military unit known for human rights violations.[150] Likewise, the MSPC declared it was not only the government which was held accountable for human rights abuses but also the underground

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[143] Military assaults on villages where suspected rebels are stationed. The local residents are forced to vacate their land and then an all-out military offensive follows. This practice severely affected people's livelihood and living conditions.
[144] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines...*, 85.
[145] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines*, 7-16.
[146] Ibid., 12-13.
[147] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' 431.
[148] Ibid.
[149] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines*, 45-47.
[150] Ibid.

movement. The centrist position of the bishops gave more impetus to the active non-violent movement known as *Aksyon sa Kapayapaan at Katarungan* (AKKAPKA, Action for Peace and Justice) that Fr. José Blanco SJ tried to popularise among base sectors and BCCs.[151] AKKAPKA held seminars nationwide with various groups and organisations based on Gospel principles of peace, justice, and love coupled with Mahatma Gandhi's principles of active non-violence to rectify evil and transform society. The movement's influence became an important factor in the non-violent resistance during the February 1986 revolution.[152]

The Church's commitment to safeguard human rights contributed much to the political awareness, education and mobilisation not only of the Church people themselves but of the citizenry at large. The issues around human rights became a crucial arena for rallying the people to unveil the illusions that concealed the systematic atrocities of the national security State. Human rights advocacy helped to provide a driving force for advancing the cause of democratisation.[153] Being a highly politically charged issue, the defence of human rights became an ideological battleground of political groups. This affected human rights groups and TFD's independent character. The Church hierarchy took a centrist position by denouncing the use of violence by both the government-military and the revolutionary Left.

3.3.3 Expanding the sites of people's participation through the Basic Christian Communities (BCCs)

Vatican II's ecclesiology underpinned the beginnings of BCCs. It stressed that the Church is the 'people of God' (comprising the hierarchy and laity) making its pilgrimage in history.[154] The Medellin Conference in 1968 affirmed this 'people of God' ecclesiology and proposed that

[151] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 28.
[152] Thompson, Searching for a strategy..., 461-463; Giordano, *Awakening to mission...*, 251-252.
[153] Silliman, 'Human rights and the transition to democracy.'
[154] 'Dogmatic Constitution of the Church,' (*Lumen Gentium*) in Austin Flannery, gen. ed., *Vatican Council II: the conciliar and post conciliar documents*, (Dublin?: Pillar Books and Costello Publishing Company, Inc., 1975), Chapter II & III.

BCCs are the way forward for the Church in Latin America. The Puebla Conference in 1979 further pushed the BCCs initial engagement closer to the lives of the poor.[155]

BCCs in the Philippines were launched in the National Rural Congress in January 1967.[156] The congress adopted the theme: 'The Church goes to the *barrios*' (rural villages).[157] In this way, the Church steered clear of town-centred Catholicism that has so characterised much of faith practice since the time of the Spanish conquest. The congress was convened a year before the Latin American Conference in Medellin in 1968 officially endorsed BCCs. For Claver, Philippine BCCs are 'wholly indigenous and not....copy-cat imitations' of Latin American BCCs, although influences from the latter affected the former subsequently.[158] The first BCCs in the Philippines were introduced in the Prelature of Tagum in Mindanao by the Maryknoll Fathers in the late 1960s.[159] It is thought that the Maryknollers were then influenced by the growth of BCCs in Latin America.[160] In 1971, a similar attempt was initiated in the Prelature of Malaybalay.[161] Both stressed lay leadership and participation; face-to-face interaction, prayer, and reflection anchored in biblical texts; and *kapilya* (chapel)-based communities which took to task various local and provincial issues. Since both were local Churches in Mindanao, the MSPC in 1971 reflected on their experiences and endorsed BCCs as the pastoral thrust for the local Churches in Mindanao.[162] The first five MSPC meetings were focused on the theme: 'Building up Christian communities in Mindanao-Sulu,' a telling sign that the formation of BCC became central in MSPC's pastoral thrust.[163] MSPC's strong backing

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[155] Brian H. Smith, 'Chile: deepening the allegiance of working-class sectors to the Church in the 1970s,' in *Religion and political conflict in Latin America*, ed. Daniel H. Levine (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 156-157.
[156] Claver, 'A history of BCCs...,' 19.
[157] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 139.
[158] Claver, 'A history of BCCs..., 26.
[159] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the* Philippines..., 80.
[160] Interview with Fr. Romeo E. Empestan, BEC Coordinator, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, 13 March 2001.
[161] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the* Philippines..., 80.
[162] Ibid., 82.
[163] Claver, 'A history of BCCs..., 20.

explains to a great extent the phenomenal growth of BCCs in Mindanao compared with those in Visayas or Luzon. It was only in 1977 when the CBCP issued a pastoral letter adopting BCC as a new lay mission in the country.[164]

There were a few variants of BCCs and at times they competed with each other despite efforts to bring them together in meetings and conferences. In terms of pastoral approaches, many BCCs were focused on liturgical concerns (worship, prayer), others stressed on developmental projects (livelihood programmes), and a few aimed to adopt liberational strategies (regime and structural change). The nascent BCCs, particularly those which were initiated in the Prelature of Malaybalay were *kapilya*-based communities headed by an *alagad* (lay leader).[165] *KRISKA* (*Kristiyanong Kasilinganan*, Christian neighbourhood community), stressing neighbourhood contacts rather than the *kapilya*-based communities, was popularised and introduced in various parts of Mindanao in the early 1970s.[166] The Redemptorist Mission Teams (RMT) BCC version in Mindanao had a strong community organising (CO) component in their programme.[167] The BCC-CO (BCC *cum* community organising) employed CO as a tool for sectoral, not necessarily parochial, formation. BCC-CO used a strict Marxist framework of social analysis. It is still perceived to be sympathetic to the national democratic movement.[168]

It is difficult to measure the extent of BCC presence throughout the country during the Marcos period since no reliable and comprehensive survey has been undertaken thus far. Nonetheless, Wurfel summarises the general impact of BCCs in the Philippine countryside:

> In rural areas the growth of basic Christian communities (BCC) was of greatest importance. The Catholic Church traditionally had little direct contact with the village; it was a fortunate barrio that had a visit from the parish priest once a year, on the day of the local patron saint. By the early 1980s the BCC movement had practically revolutionized the locus and purpose of church activity in several provinces. Basic Christian communities at the village level, with lay leadership but at least initial religious guidance,

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[164] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 87.
[165] Francisco Claver, 'Pastoral and administrative organization of the prelature,' In *Quinquennial Report: Prelature of Malaybalay*, (Malaybalay: Prelature of Malaybalay, 1981), 2-3, 8.
[166] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the* Philippines..., 86-87.
[167] Ibid., 88-89.
[168] Ibid., 90-95.

> not only brought a new awareness of the faith to the peasantry but related that faith to everyday problems, among them illegal expropriation by multinational corporations, midnight raids (sometimes with rape and pillage) by the military, and even evacuation from 'free fire zones'.... This sense of lay autonomy and new linkages between activists clergy and peasantry greatly strengthened Church-based protest.[169]

BCCs, to some degree, 'brought the church to the rural population' by stressing 'human development and liberation' through social consciousness raising and mobilisation of people and resources.[170] BCCs virtually regenerated church presence in the rural areas since the Church was basically town-centred. This was particularly the case in some local Churches in Mindanao.

Two confidential government reports prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Minister of National Defence in 1975 and 1978 respectively raised some suspicions about the BCC movement which was viewed as a 'dangerous form of threat from the religious radicals.'[171] In some cases, thoroughgoing state repression of BCCs led some members to join the underground movement. Other BCCs remained committed to non-violent activism such as the case of the 'Negros Nine' in the Diocese of Bacolod (Frs. Niall O'Brian SSC, Brian Gore SSC, and Vicente Dangan and six lay leaders) who were all BCC proponents and leaders.[172] They were accused of murdering Mayor Pablo Sola, Mayor of Kabangkalan, in 1983. They were detained while the trial was in progress. Under intense pressure at varying levels (local and particularly the BCCs, national and international), the charges were eventually dismissed in 1984.[173]

Claver claims that while some BCCs were suspected of being 'subversive by the government... they were perceived as carriers of the revolution by elements on the Left –and attempts to so use them have not been wanting.'[174] Still, BCCs were virtually a significant force

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[169] Wurfel, *Filipino politics...*, 261-262.
[170] G. Sidney Silliman and Lela Garner Noble, 'Citizens movement and Philippine democracy,' in *NGOs, civil society, and the Philippine State: organizing for democracy* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998), 284.
[171] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 93.
[172] Alfred McCoy, Priests on trial: Father Gore and Father O'Brien caught in the crossfire between dictatorship and revolution. Victoria: The Dominion Press - Hedges and Bell, Penguin Books, 1984.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Claver, 'A history of BCCs..., 22.

for democratisation in Philippine society. Claver notes key qualities of BCCs making them genuine actors in democratisation: an ethos of participation, a commitment to the poor and to lay leadership, community-orientated, liberational, concerned with integral human development, discerning and faith-based communities.[175] BCCs not only provided sites of participation within the Church, but in some cases they became effective vehicles for mobilising the rural poor.[176] The BCCs experiences in the Diocese of Malaybalay and Diocese of Bacolod (see Chapters Five and Six) are but a few examples of how these small Christian communities were able to engage critically the local government and military in their struggle to educate the people politically and mobilise them for collective action.

3.3.4 Socialisation and mobilisation of the citizenry

To a large extent, a crucial role that the Church played along with civil society groups was the socialisation and mobilisation of existing groups and the citizenry to challenge the Marcos regime. This enabled the people, who were initially ambivalent or tolerant of the State at the inception of martial law, to stand for social justice, freedom and political transformation of the state and society. Prior to martial law, the Church was socio-economically involved in organising and mobilising workers and peasants. A significant post-Vatican II push to socialise and mobilise people for social action was the National Rural Congress in 1967. Owing to the participation of government agencies in the congress, church-government partnership was at its peak and it made critical inroads in various socio-economic projects in rural areas.[177] In two years (1967-1969), the Church sponsored two thousand socio-economic projects.[178] Reforms within the Church, nonetheless, were not progressing in tandem with Vatican II. In 1969, two years after the National Rural Congress, the clamour for reforms was focused on the church

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[175] Ibid., 22-26.
[176] See Mendoza et al., *Church of the people....*
[177] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 78.
[178] Fabros, *The Church and its social involvement in the Philippines...*, 127.

leadership. Catholic students and leaders belonging to the Laymen's Association for Post-Vatican II Reforms (LAPVIIR) and the Christian Socialism Movement (CSM) held a 57-day rally at the residence of Rufino Cardinal Santos, Archbishop of Manila on March 28, 1969 to challenge 'the responsiveness of the archdiocese to present needs' and its 'resistance to change.'[179] This concern became a unifying theme in the first three yearly assemblies of the Philippine Priests Incorporated (PPI), whose members numbered one thousand four hundred priests.[180]

In the late 1960s and 1970s, the Church was a key player in the initiation and expansion of social groups and movements that in turn were crucial for organising the people. Some members of the clergy were actively engaged in different political and sectoral organisations and movements. Apart from the creation of FFW and FFF, various church clergy and lay people were engaged in the formation of *Kilusang Khi Rho ng Pilipinas* (KKRP) (Khi Rho Movement of the Philippines), *Kilusang Kristiyano ng Kabataang Pilipino* (KKP) (Christian Movement of the Filipino Youth), *Kapulungan ng mga Sandigang ng Pilipinas* (KASAPI) (Assembly of People for whom the Philippines relies) and the Young Christian Socialists of the Philippines (YCSP).[181] *Lakas ng Diwang Kayumanggi* (Power of the Malay Spirit) or Lakasdiwa and CNL were founded respectively by Edmundo Garcia, a Jesuit scholastic, and Fr. Edicio de la Torre.[182]

An important partnership binding the bishops and the business sector was the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference (BBC), created in 1971. The two parties shared the vision 'to bring about radical reform in Philippine society by democratic and peaceful means.'[183] This partnership not only displayed hierarchy-laity interaction but launched a new vision of human development anchored on Papal social teaching (particularly *Populorum Progressio*) and Vatican

[179] Ibid., 128; Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 146.
[180] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 69 & 79.
[181] Ibid., 79.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Fabros, *The Church and its social involvement in the Philippines...*, 143.

II, and promoted a sense of 'corporate citizenship.'[184] In this regard, Fabros reports that 'the sixty corporations comprising the Foundation for Social Progress pledged to deposit 1 percent of their net earnings to the foundation's fund for development projects.'[185] Apart from generating a corporate fund for social projects, BBC's backing for NAMFREL in the 1980s proved to be crucial to its electoral projects in 1984 and 1986.[186]

Mass protests either church-backed or led were not highly visible from the beginning of the martial law period until 1983. Although the Church became increasingly critical over time, 'the parliament of the streets' or the protest movement, prior to 1983, was not seen as an avenue for engaging the State, at least as far as the mainstream Church was concerned. The year 1983 marked a sea change in the progressive deterioration of church-state relations, and the phenomenal growth of the protest movement. Worsening church-state relations led the CBCP to dis-engage from the CMLC in January 1983.[187] On August 21, 1983, former Senator Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino, thought to be the political leader who could unify the opposition was assassinated upon arrival at the Manila International Airport (later renamed Ninoy Aquino International Airport), under the custody of military guards. His death sparked the biggest mass protests in the post-colonial Philippines. Cardinal Sin led eleven bishops in presiding at the funeral Mass which was followed by a funeral procession of about 13 miles to the cemetery.[188] The mourning of the Filipino people turned into a sombre protest movement. Some 1,000,000 people manifested their indignation and mourning during the nine-hour funeral.[189] Others watched on television and many tuned in on their radios. The spirit of solidarity was well

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[184] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 139; Eva-Lotta E. Hedman, 'In the name of civil society: contesting free elections in the post-colonial Philippines,' Ph. D. Dissertation, Cornell University, 1998, 268-273.
[185] Fabros, *The Church and its social involvement in the Philippines...*, 143.
[186] Hedman, 'In the name of civil society...,' 272-273.
[187] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church...*, 197.
[188] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 250.
[189] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 31; two other estimates put the figure to 2,000,000, see Rocamora, *Breaking through...*, 34; Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 250.

captured in the words etched in mourning pins: *Ninoy, hindi ka nag-iisa* (Ninoy, you are not alone). The people's use of religious symbols (e.g., celebration of Masses, prayer vigils, religious articles) during the wake and funeral of Ninoy Aquino became powerful images of resistance for subsequent protest movements.

Aquino's death, in many ways, consolidated the middle force (social democrats, liberal democrats, independent groups) and the Church in their opposition to the Marcos government.[190] Kroeger summarises the immediate outcome of the Aquino assassination in this way:

> In the weeks following the assassination, there were well-attended and largely peaceful demonstrations almost daily in Manila and in other parts of the country; they called for justice for Aquino, national reforms, an end to the U.S. role in the Philippines and Marcos' resignation. These demonstrations were, by far, the largest and most frequent since the declaration of ML (martial law) in 1972.[191]

Indeed between August 21 and the end of September 1983, the government claimed that 'there were 165 rallies, marches, and other demonstrations.'[192] These demonstrations were accompanied by the emergence of coalition building and consolidation of organised groups to forge a unified anti-Marcos opposition. The groups included an umbrella organisation called Justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA),[193] which later was subsumed under Coalition for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD) for the 1984 election,[194] August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM), led by Aquino's brother, Agapito 'Butz' Aquino, business group *Manindigan* (Fight), Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy (NAJFD),[195] which was incorporated in the founding congress of *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (BAYAN, New Nationalist Alliance)

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[190] Wurfel, *Filipino politics*, Chapter 10; Thompson, 'Searching for a strategy: the traditional opposition to Marcos and the transition to democracy in the Philippines,' 341-343.
[191] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 251.
[192] Thompson, 'Searching for a strategy: the traditional opposition to Marcos and the transition to democracy in the Philippines,' 341.
[193] JAJA, led by former senator Tañada as chair and former senator José Diokno, was the first major coalition of the Left and middle forces.
[194] David Timberman, *A Changeless land: continuity and change in Philippine politics*, (Pasir Panjang: Institute of South Asia Studies, 1991), 132-133.
[195] NAFJD, chaired by former senator Lorenzo Tañada, was dominated by national democrats with a few liberals and moderate nationalists.

in 1985,[196] *Bansang Nagkaisa sa Diwa at Layunin* (BANDILA, United Nation in Spirit and Purpose),[197] *Bukluran para sa Ika-uunlad ng Sosyalism sa Isip at Gawa* (Unity for the Progress of Socialism in Theory and Practice),[198] *Lakas ng Sambayanan* (Power of the People). Two distinct streams of protest movements confronted and challenged the State: the 'yellow' and the 'red.' The former was led by the business sector, the middle and upper class, BANDILA, ATOM and other political formations representing liberal democrats, social democrats and independent socialists, and mainline Churches (including some protestant groups), while the latter was spearheaded by political groups allied with the Left, the organised poor and workers led by BAYAN.[199] In the 'yellow stream,' moderate and some conservative church leaders and lay people were involved in various tasks: providing theological and religious motivations for Christian involvement, celebration of Masses and prayer vigils, attendance during rallies, holding religious services during protest assemblies, resource mobilisation, and lending logistical support.[200] Progressive church people, on the other hand, supported the 'red stream.' Thus the Church along with other political groups became a key player in organising, networking, and mobilising the citizenry.

Amid fears of vote rigging and election-related violence, the CBCP stance on the *Batasang Pambansa* (National Assembly) elections in May 1984 was neither for nor against participation. While some elements in the Church, including Cardinal Sin, called for participation, the CBCP remained neutral. Others including the AMRSP and the Left urged boycott. In many areas, however, some clergy, nuns and lay people supported the reactivation and mobilisation of the National Movement for Free Election (NAMFREL), an electoral

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[196] BAYAN (meaning 'people') is a broad alliance largely led by the national democrats, socialists and a few liberals.
[197] BANDILA is a left-of-centre and middle force coalition composed mainly by social democrats, independent liberals and liberal democrats.
[198] BISIG is a coalition of socialists and independent Marxists.
[199] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 33-34.
[200] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 242-277; Thompson, 'Searching for a strategy: the traditional opposition to Marcos and the transition to democracy in the Philippines,' 336-348.

watchdog established in 1951, with backing then from the US government through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), business groups and to a limited extent by the Church in 1950s.[201] Some bishops accepted the task as NAMFREL provincial co-chairpersons, while priests, nuns and lay people acted as poll watchers.[202] With the backing from the business sector, civic groups and the Church, the electoral movement was able to recruit 200,000 poll watchers.[203] Unlike the massive boycott in the 1976 referendum and 1981 presidential polls, participation in the 1984 electoral exercise was seen as more attuned to the general desire of the public than the boycott movement.[204] NAMFREL's work factored in what appeared to be a successful challenge against the administration with the opposition garnering 70 out of the 183 congressional seats, despite the odds.[205] The economy meantime was teetering on the verge of bankruptcy as capital flight intensified, foreign debt increased and cronyism became widespread.[206]

Marcos, feeling the intense pressure from the people and the US government, sought a fresh mandate by announcing a snap presidential election on February 7, 1986, one year earlier than mandated in the 1973 Constitution.[207] Corazon 'Cory' C. Aquino, with the full backing from the Church and middle force protest movement, emerged as the symbol of hope and struggle to restore democracy in the country. Cardinal Sin, with clear US approval, was pivotal in forging a unified opposition party under United Nationalist Democratic Organisation (UNIDO) with Aquino running as president and Salvador 'Doy' Laurel as her vice-president.[208] The Left boycotted the snap elections following a failed bid to unify the broad anti-Marcos coalition in the founding congress of BAYAN.[209] Nevertheless, the proponents of the boycott movement underestimated the pulse of the people. The move proved to be a costly political

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[201] Hedman, 'In the name of civil society: contesting free elections in the post-colonial Philippines,' 116-133.
[202] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 259.
[203] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church,...*, 198.
[204] Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization...*, 259.
[205] Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church,...*, 198.
[206] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 33-34.
[207] Wurfel, *Filipino politics*, 295.
[208] Ibid., 296.
[209] Rocamora, *Breaking through...*, 33-41.

blunder as it displaced them from the mainstream of the people's struggle. Soon cracks within the Left began to surface. The boycott movement left some unintended effects: deepening of division within the ranks and the subsequent decline of the movement as a whole.[210] The campaign period served as a forum to educate people on pressing issues that affected them most and to mobilise them to press for the removal of Marcos during the electoral exercise. *Sobra na, tama na, palitan na* (Enough is enough, change now) was the battle cry of the citizenry. The multiplicity of political groups (liberal democrats, social democrats, independent socialists) and individuals who had no political affiliation did not have any broad consensus that would suffice as a political programme of the opposition. Thus collective struggle was not anchored on ideological programmes and the only factor that united the opposition movement was their firm determination to remove Marcos.

NAMFREL was once again reactivated and reaccredited by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC). The Church vigorously campaigned for participation in the voting exercise and in the work of NAMFREL. Church support for NAMFREL was by no means wanting. Cardinal Sin in a letter to the Archdiocese of Manila urged his pastors to offer 'material and moral support' to NAMFREL and organise prayer vigils in parishes for a fair, clean and honest election.[211] NAMFREL organised its *Bantay ng Bayan* (Watchdog of the People) and enlisted some half a million electoral volunteers all over the country.[212] Some 80 national organisations and groups participated in the work of NAMFREL.[213] Some twenty percent of NAMFREL coordinators on the national and provincial levels were members of the hierarchy (priests and bishops). The Catholic establishments such as parishes and those belonging to the Catholic Education Association of the Philippines (CEAP) were hosts to NAMFREL headquarters in the

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[210] Wurfel, *Filipino politics*, 314.
[211] Jaime Cardinal Sin, 'Letter to the priests of the Archdiocese,' Manila: Arzobispado de Manila, 15 January 1986.
[212] Eva-Lotta E. Hedman, 'Whose business is it anyway? Free and fair elections in the Philippines,' *Public Policy* II(3), (July/September 1998), 159.
[213] Hedman, 'In the name of civil society...,' 236.

provinces.[214] The La Salle brothers hosted the NAMFREL Operation Quick Count (OQC) at the de la Salle University while Loyola House of Studies, a Jesuit institute at the Ateneo de Manila University Campus, was a command centre of the NAMFREL Marines and volunteers.[215] The NAMFREL Marines were priests, religious and seminarians clad in their cassocks and religious habits as they monitored the conduct of the polling places, guarded and transported the ballots to official canvassing areas, and kept vigil until the counting was over. NAMFREL was resolutely determined to protect the dignity of the ballot, ensure clean and honest elections, despite actual threats on the lives of volunteers. As expected, massive cheating and systematic fraud were uncovered, not to mention many incidents of election-related violence. NAMFREL's OQC showed Aquino leading by a substantial margin against Marcos. The walk-out of COMELEC computer operators to protest the electoral fraud further buttressed the claim of massive cheating.[216] These operators were housed in houses of religious congregations for fear of being hijacked. The Church was at the forefront of this electoral and post-electoral struggle: mobilising NAMFREL volunteers, hosting electoral headquarters, monitoring and safeguarding electoral and post-electoral results. All these showed that the Church contributed significantly to the socialisation and mobilisation of the citizenry. The Church and the BBC were key allies in NAMFREL providing all kinds of support: spiritual, logistical, personnel, leadership, material, and moral confidence.

Following the CBCP snap polls statement, on February 16, a massive mobilisation dubbed as the *Tagumpay ng Bayan* (Victory of the People) staged a Mass in Rizal Park, Manila. Some one million people assembled to proclaim their own version of the real victors of the snap election.[217] Various organised protests of massive scale followed.[218] A faction of the military

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[214] Youngblood, 'The Corazon Aquino "miracle" and the Philippine Churches,' 9; Hedman, 'In the name of civil society: contesting free elections in the post-colonial Philippines,' 232.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 36.
[217] Rey Arquiza, 'Cory: seven steps to bring Marcos down,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer* 17 February 1986.
[218] For more details see Arquiza, 'Cory....'

led by the Reform the Armed Forces of the Philippines Movement (RAM) had planned a coup against Marcos but the plot was uncovered. This prompted the resignation of then Minister of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile, a key influence in RAM, and military Vice Chief of Staff Lt. General Fidel V. Ramos while they were holed up in military camps (Camp Aguinaldo and Camp Crame) along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA). Cardinal Sin appealed to the public to protect Enrile and Ramos while military leadership defections followed. This sparked the momentous 'people power' mobilisation from February 22 to 25, where more than a million people trooped to EDSA.[219] The people, armed with religious icons and symbols, responded to the appeal of Sin to protect the rebel troops from being assaulted by the loyalist soldiers. They did so not so much 'because he was Cardinal,' as Carroll puts it, 'but because through the years of martial law he had spoken out on their behalf and they had come to trust him, and most of all because at that moment he was voicing their anger and frustration at a stolen election.'[220] The Catholic radio station Radio Veritas was a key instrument for keeping the people informed of events and ensuring a peaceful resolution to the conflict as military defections in support of Aquino started to gain momentum. On February 25, Marcos left the presidential palace for Hawaii and in no time Corazon C. Aquino was sworn in as the President of the Republic by Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee.

3.4 Conclusion

Gill's theoretical framework explaining the Church's relationship with the State in Latin American on the basis of a 'rational-actor model of behaviour'[221] when placed side-by-side with the Philippine Church experience appears untenable. Gill posits that the Church seeks to

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[219] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 37.
[220] John J. Carroll, 'Civil society, the Churches, and the Ouster of Erap,' in *Between fires: fifteen perspectives on the Estrada Crisis*, ed. Amando Doronila (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing Inc., and Makati City: Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2001), *247.*
[221] See Gill, *Rendering unto Caesar....* For similar views, see Warner, 'A New paradigm for sociological study of religion in the United States;' Ekelund, Hebert, and Talison, 'An Economic model of the Medieval Church.'

maximise its corporate benefits (e.g., ecclesial interests and the expansion of membership) and minimise costs (e.g., diminished income, influence and membership). He likens the Church to an economic 'unitary actor' which like any secular establishment must allocate its resources to maximise its economic gains and minimise loses.[222] The Philippine Church, far from being a monolithic actor, is characterised by complexities, differences and conflicts, and can hardly be considered as a unitary actor as Gill would want it to be treated. The ideological cleavages and varying pastoral emphases showed that the reforms set out by Vatican II were uneven. Despite its own internal dynamics, over time it was able to form and consolidate a broad consensus regarding its relationship with the State.

More importantly, the Church was not simply acted upon by exogenous factors impinging on its own interests (e.g., state repression, human rights violations, and persecution against the Church), although these factored in the Church's increasing resolve to oppose the Marcos regime. The Philippine Catholic Church, following the reforms set out by Vatican II and Catholic social teaching, had an agenda, however provisional initially it might have been, for the sort of engagement it would have with Philippine State and society. These theological principles (e.g., people of God ecclesiology) anchored on Vatican II and Catholic social teaching provided a framework for the Philippine Church's own religious identity, insertion in the public domain, and mission. The Latin American bishops appropriated for themselves with the participation of the laity, these general principles in the Medellin Conference (1968) and Puebla Conference (1979). The Philippine bishops too reinterpreted for themselves along with their flock what these 'signs of the times' meant for them in the light of faith.

Although Vatican II did not explicitly propose concrete lines of action in view of democracy, it did provide a foundational experience and understanding that by implication must

[222] Gill *Rendering unto Caesar*, 10-11.

come to terms with democracy. Hehir correctly connects Vatican II and the experience of democracy in this way:

> Both the experience and teaching of Vatican II provided the church with a new basis for relating to democracy.... The (Vatican II) document *Gaudium et Spes*, focused on defining the church's relationship to the world, has had a profound and systematic impact on the life of the church.... The conciliar document (*Gaudium et* Spes) not only legitimised social ministry, it also moved the social dimension of ministry toward the center of Catholic life. If one surveys the experience of the church since 1965, in situations as diverse as Latin America, Eastern Europe, and South Africa, it is virtually impossible to explain on an *ad hoc* basis the public role played by the Catholic hierarchy and the wider community of the church. The intensity of public engagement has escalated and the willingness to confront major centers of political and economic power in the name of human rights and social justice has noticeably expanded.[223]

Thus the Philippine Church along with the other Churches that resisted authoritarian and communist regimes was not merely reacting to the events that appeared to threaten its interests. It was indeed an actor in democratisation with its own experience of ambivalence, limitation, internal conflict, but not without a vision of human society. This vision was immensely driven by Vatican II and Catholic social teaching starting from Pope Leo XXIII's social encyclical (*Rerum Novarum*) in 1891, although the reforms did not proceed uniformly. The roles assumed by the Church as discussed in the foregoing were enabling steps that brought their vision of human society closer to reality.

The Philippine Church promoted democratisation, firstly, by withdrawing moral legitimacy from the NSS ideology and conferring it instead upon the pro-democracy forces through its pronouncements. These pronouncements shaped the position of the Church with regard to the State. Its relationship with the State evolved from one of adaptation, and ambivalence to an increasing opposition and disengagement. The deterioration in church-state relations culminated in the February 1986 statement of CBCP when the hierarchy declared that the State had 'no moral basis' to govern in the wake of electoral fraud and violence. The hierarchy when passing moral judgment on the legitimacy of the State invited its members to

[223] Hehir, 'Catholicism and democracy,' 23.

make their own decision. The February 1986 statement clearly did not want to impose the reading of the bishops on the people nor were they talking *above* them, but discerned *with* them, decided and acted *with* them. All this points to hierarchy-laity interaction (church *ad intra*) as an important resource for sustained collective action. This interaction was persistent and sustained considering that both parties had disparate elements whose understanding of the Church's pastoral strategies and social mission varied to some degree.

Secondly, the Church was engaged actively in the defence and advocacy of human rights through its organisations and its leaders, even coming from conservative prelates like Archbishop Mabutas of Davao. Like the process of de-legitimation of the State, commitment to human rights evolved from one of timidity to outright condemnation of the excesses of the military rule. Defence of human rights, whether promoted by the CBCP, AMRSP, individual church leaders or by TFD along with other human rights group (eg FLAG) not only confronted the authoritarian government to rein in military abuse of power, but served as a good political education, a rallying point for mobilisation and opposition to the hegemonic tendencies of a repressive state. The death of Ninoy Aquino under the custody of the military crystallised the gravity of military abuses. Thus the Church's opposition vis-à-vis authoritarian rule became much more consolidated.

Thirdly, the Church's involvement in democratisation included rural areas through the formation of BCCs as sites of people's participation. The BCCs not only decentralised the Church's power and influence, but more importantly, they mainstreamed lay participation particularly in the rural populace. The flourishing of BCCs demonstrated the high point of positive ordained ministers and lay interaction. BCCs became loci of interest articulation and representation, enabling structures that facilitated hierarchy-laity interaction. The local cases in the Diocese of Malaybalay and that of Bacolod as presented in this study aptly demonstrate this point.

Finally, the Church was a rallying actor for the socialisation and mobilisation of civil society groups and citizens that eventually toppled the Marcos dictatorship. Evidently it was clear from the Church's involvement with organised groups (e.g., FFW and FFF) in the 1950s that the civil society organisations were crucial to the success of the democratic project. Thus the Church in various moments leading to the restoration of democracy had to engage in partnership with civil society organisations (church *ad extra*). Church partnership with politicised groups, to varying ideological predilections, with the electoral movement NAMFREL, with the business sector (BBC), and with the traditional political opposition proved immensely vital in the final drive to oust Marcos from power. The socialisation and mobilisation of the citizenry, through rallies, prayer vigils, electoral participation and vigilance particularly in the 1986 election, and the events in February 1986, buttressed people's capacity to effect the needed political change.

Thus one can see some beginnings of the church *ad intra* (hierarchy-laity interaction) and *ad extra* (church-civil society connection) in its religio-political involvement. The growing empowerment of the laity (e.g., rise of BCCs, laity's political involvement) and the emergence of civil society groups were a post-Vatican II development. The finest hour of church *ad intra* was the Presidential snap polls in 1986 which eventually lead to the ouster of Marcos. The CBCP February statement correctly read the pulse of the people. Cardinal Sin's decisive call for support in EDSA was matched by people's participation and show of solidarity. Alongside the progressive development of church *ad intra* was the Church's engagement with civil society actors. In human rights issues, key church organisations such as TFD and NASSA likewise played a vital role in linking up with other organised groups. Church involvement shifted from direct engagement of the hierarchy with the State to more hierarchy-laity interaction (church *ad intra*) and church-civil society partnership (church *ad extra*) in view of the democratic enterprise.

The roles played by the Church during the transition period were likewise assumed by many national Churches around the globe that struggled against authoritarianism and communism. The de-legitimation of authoritarian states in Latin American countries and conferral of moral support for the opposition were likewise done by the different Churches. This was also the case in Eastern and Central Europe, particularly Poland, and some African countries (see Chapter Two). In a similar way, the defence and advocacy of human rights, the proliferation of BCCs as sites of interest articulation and representation, and the socialisation and mobilisation of the citizenry, as collective or individual actors, -- in all these the Church actively engaged itself to varying degrees.

These roles too had an important political outcome on people: the initiation of a new understanding and practice of citizenship. In the process of articulating a broad consensus on the illegitimacy of the authoritarian regime and the legitimacy of the pro-democratic forces, advocating human rights, building BCCs, and socialising and mobilising the people and civil society actors, the Church was fashioning a new breed of citizenry that eventually challenged and confronted an authoritarian state and inaugurated an era of democracy. Citizenship in this sense is not merely a status, but also entails active participation. The Church's commitment to enhance citizenship education and practice was a function of both church *ad intra* and church *ad extra* linkages. The Church's push to inaugurate a season of democracy would not have been so effective and lasting were it not for these two enabling linkages that boosted the potential of the Church as a democratic actor.

The Church's roles during the martial law period have a bearing in the post-authoritarian period. Restoring democratic space, however, is one part of the story. It needs to be complemented with the building of democratic gains by ensuring survivability, consolidation and deepening of democracy. Reconstructing post-transition democracy is a much more complex task than initiating democratisation. Given the complexity of this democratising polity,

particularly when the early appetite of people and organised groups for democratisation has been whittled down, the Church assumes perhaps an even more crucial role than it did during the democratic transition. The next chapter will shed more light on this point.

Chapter Four

The Philippine Catholic Church in the post-authoritarian period: returning to the sacristy or re-engaging with democracy?

'In many mature democracies, political mobilisation is carried out by the political parties. In our (Philippine) democracy, the Church's national infrastructure serves as the vehicle for mass mobilisation.'
-Amando Doronila[1]

Chapter Three argues that the Church was not simply acted upon by the repressive condition of the Marcos regime, but was indeed an actor with its own democratic agenda buttressed principally by Vatican II and Catholic social teaching. In initiating democratisation, the Church played vital roles: de-legitimating the NSS ideology of the regime, sustaining defence and advocacy of human rights, expanding sites of people's participation through the BCCs, and promoting socialisation and mobilisation of the citizenry leading to the collapse of the authoritarian State. In these areas of involvement, church *ad intra* (hierarchy-laity interaction) and church *ad extra* (church-civil society linkage) enhanced the Church's capacity as a key protagonist in democratisation. In the process, the Church was shaping a new concept and practice of citizenship that propelled the democratic current. The main arguments in Chapter Three are pursued further in the context of post-authoritarian Philippine society. To simplify this narrative, a chronology of events is provided for in the Appendices (see Appendix 3).

This chapter will first locate the Catholic Church in the post-authoritarian setting. Some attempts have been made to situate the politics of the Church in the post-authoritarian Philippines. The works of John J. Carroll,[2] Robert Youngblood,[3] and some chapters in Gretchen Casper[4] are important in this regard, but none has adequately treated the Catholic Church's *ad intra* and *ad extra* dynamics and its engagement in citizenship building. Second, it will

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[1] Amando Doronila, 'Pulling back from the brink,' *The Manila Chronicle*, 22 September 1997, 9.
[2] Carroll, 'Church and State...;' John J. Carroll, 'Cracks in the wall of separation? The Churches, civil society, and the State in the Philippines, in *The Fall of Estrada: the inside story*, ed. Amando Doronila, Vol. II (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing Inc., and Makati City: Philippine Daily Inquirer, forthcoming); Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?....'
[3] Robert Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches: a "constructive critical solidarity",' *Pilipinas: a journal of Philippine studies* 13 (Fall 1989), 57-71.
[4] Casper, *Fragile democracies*....

investigate the Church's involvement in enhancing democracy. This involvement can be seen in its support for the 1987 Charter, its defence of the fragile democratic state, its push for electoral reform, its promotion of peace and human rights, its advocacy against the Charter change attempts, and its commitment to good governance. These attempts to build democracy, if not to ensure its survival, plainly show that the Church was a proactive actor and not simply reacting to democratic issues. Finally, the chapter will conclude by re-stating the basic proposition of this thesis: church *ad intra* (hierarchy-laity) and church *ad extra* (church-civil society) linkages provide better prospects for the Church's involvement in citizenship formation.

4.1 The Church in a democratising context

The post-authoritarian Church was well positioned in Philippine society following the accession of President Corazon C. Aquino to power. The Church was seen by the State as a vital ally in democratisation. In terms of its public acceptability, the Philippine Church in the post-authoritarian setting enjoyed a huge trust margin in surveys of popular opinion posting +65 ('big trust' minus 'small trust') in September 1988, +66 a year later.[5] Like many national Churches especially in Latin America immediately after the post-authoritarian and post-communist societies,[6] the Philippine Church was the most credible and trusted organisation beating the other national establishments and organisations including the judiciary, Congress, business and the media.[7] Although persecution and harassment of some church people continued, unlike during the days of Marcos, the State, as a matter of policy, was careful not to antagonise the Church.

Nevertheless, the Church struggled with its new found role in the post-Marcos era. On July 14, 1986, the Pope in a letter to the Philippine bishops, while expressing gratitude to them for the peaceful resolution of the crisis that gripped the nation, reminded them 'not to take

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[5] Mahar Mangahas, 'Who's afraid of the Catholic Church?' *Social Weather Bulletin* 91-4, February 1991, 1-2; see also Table 1 in the Appendices.
[6] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002...*, 69.
[7] Mangahas, 'Who's afraid of the Catholic Church?' 1-2.

positions of a political character, or to take part in partisan conflicts but to give society the expert contribution which is proper to her....'[8] The bishops' role, the Pope said, was to be 'an instrument of reconciliation and communion' and therefore they should avoid provoking or deepening divisions.[9] Similarly, Cardinal Sin admitted: 'Our situation now should be in a low profile, avoiding the limelight.'[10]

The popular perception appeared to indicate some ambivalence with regard to the Church's involvement in politics. The Ateneo de Manila University-Social Weather Stations (SWS) in April 1986 revealed equally opposing views with 40% against and 40% for the Church's participation 'in the struggle of the oppressed.'[11] The Ateneo-SWS's June 1986 report suggested that 45% agreed that the 'church should not get involved in working for clean and honest elections' as opposed to 34% who disagreed.[12] An even larger plurality of 49% agreed as opposed to 29% who disagreed that it 'should not support any candidate in an election.'[13] Given this climate, political demobilisation was the order of the day, but not for long.

Church-state relations during the Aquino administration were anchored on 'constructive critical collaboration' that largely stressed collaboration.[14] The Church backed Aquino generally. Similarly the State sought help from the Church particularly in strengthening the fragile democracy. The Church made occasional criticisms against the State. Cardinal Sin, in his homily at the Mass commemorating the first 100 days of the Aquino administration, lamented that the gains of the People Power I uprising were 'little by little being lost.'[15] In 1987,

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[8] *L'Osservatore Romano*, 'Pope's letter to bishops of (the) Philippines: ministry of teaching and guidance at service of truth and justice,' 28, 14 July 1986, 5.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Rodney Tasker, 'The Religion factor: the Church remains a potent though low-profile political force,' *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 15 January 1987, 16.
[11] Mangahas, 'Who is afraid of the Catholic Church?' 3.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Wilfrido V. Villacorta, 'Ideological orientation of political forces in the Aquino era,' in *economy and politics in the Philippines under Corazon Aquino*, ed. Bernham Dahm (Hamburg: Insitut für Asienkunde, 1991), 166. In a similar vein, the Philippine bishops used 'constructive critical solidarity' to press home the point that they would support government initiatives which in their judgment are compatible with church teaching and criticise those opposed to it. See Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches....'
[15] *The Tribune*, 'Cardinal Sin criticises Aquino government,' 24 August 1986, 1.

church leaders raised the issue of graft and corruption in the administration and the drift of President Aquino away from the constituency that backed her to power.[16] The CBCP issued a statement on July 14, 1987 insisting that peace could be achieved through genuine land reform.[17] In 1988, by way of a follow up, Cardinal Sin urged the Aquino administration to push for land reform as mandated in the Constitution.[18] In another vein, some one hundred bishops met on August 7, 1988 and urged the Aquino government to uphold human rights.[19] Further, they warned right-wing military officers to desist from destabilisation efforts through military coup attempts.[20] Church-military relations during the Aquino administration remained tense particularly with regard to the latter's counter-insurgency campaigns and human rights abuses.[21] The persecution of some lay people continued and human rights violations persisted despite institutional commitment to uphold human dignity.

Another source of tension in church-state relations was the government's health programme on maternal health and child welfare. This was not primarily a fertility reduction scheme, although it may eventually lead to that.[22] Despite a fruitful church-state dialogue, a CBCP statement in October 1990 criticised the government programme as if the dialogue had not occurred.[23] The government's stand to scale down its population growth of 2.48%, the fastest in Southeast Asia, did not sit well with the Church's leadership position following the line of

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[16] Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches..., 58.
[17] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 117-121.
[18] Malou Mangahas, 'Sin prods government on genuine land reform,' *The Manila Chronicle*, 26 February 1988, 1 & 8.
[19] Caesar A. Espiritu, 'Reflections on the process of "redemocratisation" in the Philippines,' in *Economy and politics in the Philippines under Corazon Aquino* ed., Barnhard Dahm (Hamburg: Institut für Aseinkunde, 1991), 313-318.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches....
[22] Carroll, 'Church and State...,' 183-184.
[23] Ibid. A repeat of this tension during the Ramos administration was occasioned by the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development in 1994. The Church's concerns followed the Vatican line and opposed the government position as regards abortion on demand, population control, sexuality, and non-traditional union of couples. See Carroll, 'Cracks in the wall of separation?..., 51.

Vatican thinking.[24] In dealing with women's fertility rights debate, the Church and State, and to some extent along with civil society organisations, were constantly at loggerheads.[25]

The Church's continuing involvement in Philippine society can be further gleaned from the Second Plenary Council in the Philippines (PCP II) in 1991 where it affirmed the Church's collective aim to pursue the renewal set out by Vatican II, although some of the reforms were already well underway in the Philippine Church (see Chapter Three).[26] PCP II had 146 lay delegates or 30% of 479, the total number of participants.[27] Bishops alone had 'deliberative' votes, while the rest had 'consultative' votes. Bp. Claver argued that while ultimately the bishops decided, everyone had the opportunity to participate in the deliberation and in practice the consultative votes had a way of swaying the bishops' verdict.[28] It was an historic moment in that for first time in the life of the Philippine Church the lay people were not merely consulted. Indeed they participated and deliberated with the hierarchical leadership, a shining moment of hierarchy-laity relationship.[29]

PCP II's thrust to become a church *of*, not for, the poor through the formation of BECs was a major ecclesiological breakthrough in the Philippine Church.[30] The poor were to become subjects and co-actors with the hierarchical leadership in the Church.[31] The building of BECs was confirmed as the way forward for the Philippine Church where elements central to PCP II can be located: lay participation especially the poor, communion of the whole Church, and

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[24] John McBeth, 'Battle of the bulge: church and state clash over contraception,' *Far Eastern Economic Review* 12 August 1993, 26.
[25] Carroll, 'Church and State...' 183-184. Interview with Danilo Songco, Executive Director, CODE-NGO, 25 January 2001, Quezon City.
[26] For more details on PCP II see *The National Coordinating Office*, 'Primer on the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines,' (Manila: CBCP, 1989)
[27] Pedro de Achútegui, 'Historical overview of the preparation and celebration of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines,' in *Journeying with the Spirit: a commentary on PCP II*, eds. Paul Bernier and Manuel G. Gabriel, (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1993), 6.
[28] Francisco F. Claver, 'Renewing a Church and nation,' *The Manila Chronicle*, 02 February 1991, 5.
[29] See *The National Coordinating Office*, 'Primer on the Second Plenary council of the Philippines,' 44.
[30] PCP II, *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, 20 January – 17 February 1991*, (Manila: PCP II Secretariat, CBCP, 1992), 47-53; Antonio F. Moreno, 'PCP II ecclesiology: a critical evaluation,' *Landas: Journal of Loyola School of Theology* 8(1), (January 1994), 36-53.
[31] PCP II, *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines...*, 52.

renewed integral evangelisation.[32] PCP II urged lay people to be politically involved 'with singular competence and integrity.'[33] In sum, it envisioned a 'participatory church,' a local version of the Vatican II ecclesiological project.[34]

The implementation of PCP II, however, remained uneven in that some local Churches were more responsive to it than others. After a decade of PCP II, the National Pastoral Consultation on Church Renewal (NPCCR), composed of 369 delegates from all over the country, met in January 2001. The NPCCR declared that 'many prescriptions of PCP II have not been implemented.'[35] Weaknesses in many diocesan programs, attitudes of church leaders and in many cases sheer inaction of the Church people were highlighted as some of the key reasons.[36] Within the Church, competing ecclesiological and theological interpretations of the Church's public engagement continue to cause internal division despite the reforms set out by Vatican II and PCP II. While organised church groups proliferated (e.g., Opus Dei, Couples for Christ, El Shaddai), they had different, at times opposing, theological bases for political involvement.

4.2 Emerging church actors and ecclesiological cleavages

Civil society organisations were not the only ones that proliferated after the authoritarian period. Church organisations and new religious movements likewise mushroomed. In the Philippine context, emerging church actors included the Iglesia ni Cristo (INC - Church of Christ), the fundamentalist movements that were staunchly anti-Catholic, Catholic groups such as El Shaddai, other charismatic movements, and Opus Dei. These actors sprang from different contexts. While many a time they competed with each other, the political positions they took made them either as allies or critics of both the Catholic Church and State.

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[32] Moreno, 'PCP II ecclesiology....'
[33] Ibid., 119.
[34] Claver, 'Renewing a Church and nation.'
[35] Orlando B. Quevedo, 'Message of the National Pastoral consultation on Church Renewal (NPCCR),' 27 January 2001.
[36] Ibid.

4.2.1 *Iglesia ni Cristo* (INC) and fundamentalist movements

The INC was founded in 1914 by Felix Y. Manalo, and later succeeded by his son Eraño. Towards the end of President Marcos' era, the INC rose to prominence, partly owing to his support. He visited periodically the INC's main headquarters in Quezon City.[37] In turn the INC leadership directed its members to vote for him in the 1986 elections, a move that nearly split its membership.[38]

The INC is a tightly organised and secretive church. Information about its total membership and operation is difficult to obtain. It was estimated in 1990 to have a following of 1.4 million believers.[39] At present, it has more than 200 congregations in 67 countries outside of the Philippines and its membership is estimated to be in the region of 3 to 10 million.[40] The INC has a number of defining characteristics. Firstly, it is a highly centralised and directive church. The Church Council headed by Eraño Manalo demands uncritical fidelity from its members. From Biblical interpretation, personal moral behaviour to political issues such as voting candidates to public office, members are told to toe the INC line or face expulsion.[41] During election periods, the INC officially endorses their candidates and members are told to vote for them, although poll survey expert Felipe Miranda argues that increasing socio-economic status of its members has given them more leeway in making political choices.[42] Secondly, as part of its fundamental creed, the INC strictly maintains that only its members are the 'elect of God,' – the only ones to be saved by God.[43] Marrying a non-INC member is a ground for dismissal.

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[37] Malou Mangahas, 'Iglesia ni Cristo: Church at the crossroads,' available from http://www.pcij.org/stories/2002/inc/html, 10 March 2003.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Malou Mangahas and Avigail M. Olarte, 'Iglesia ni Cristo: "a most powerful union",' available from http://www.pcij.org/stories/2002/inc2.html, 10 March 2003.
[40] 'Iglesia ni Cristo (Church of Christ),' available from http://www.Catholic.com/library/iglesia_ni_cristo.asap, 07 March 2003.
[41] Ann C. Harper, 'The Iglesia ni Cristo and Evangelical Christianity,' *Journal of Asian Mission* 3(1) (2001), 113-114; see Mangahas, 'Iglesia ni Cristo....'
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.

They not only oppose vigorously the Catholic Church but also mainline Protestant Churches and the evangelicals. Irenic relationship with the INC as in many ecumenical circles remains a difficult task. Thirdly, although members are forbidden to join labour unions and other such associations, and from interfering in politics, the INC leadership openly supported President Marcos in the 1986 elections, Eduardo Cojuangco in 1992, and along with El Shaddai endorsed the candidacy of Joseph Estrada in 1998. Centralised governance within the INC makes its membership attractive politically to politicians seeking for public office or maintaining their incumbencies.

Apart from the INC, the fundamentalist groups were equally a contending force in the exercise of religio-political influence over a range of issues. The rise of fundamentalist movements was a universal phenomenon in new democracies. It affected, if not challenged, mainline Catholic and Protestant groups in Latin America, Africa and some parts of Asia (see Chapter Two). From 1985 to 1988, the non-Catholic population in the Philippines rose by 13%, and from 1988 to 1992, non-Catholics posted a significantly high 18% increase.[44] With the increase of non-Catholics, one can only intuit that the 'converts' came mostly from the Catholic Church, although some belonged formerly to mainline Protestant Churches. The sizable drift to fundamentalist groups, notably the Born Again movement and the evangelical Christians, is a significant factor that explains the growing number of non-Catholics. The fundamentalist Philippine crusade movement estimates that in 1984, some 7,000 evangelical churches rose to 12,000 in 1989.[45] On the basis of SEC records where organisations and establishments are registered, the Archdiocese of Manila observes that an 'average of 290 non-Catholic religious groups established in 1987 and 1988, double the yearly average in the six previous years.'[46] The challenge posed by the evangelical movement was evident in the bishops' 1989 pastoral

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[44] CBCP Research Office, *1985 to 1995 Statistical profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines*, 18.
[45] Cohen, 'Catholics and fundamentalists fight for the faithful...,' 43.
[46] Ibid.

statement 'Hold fast to what is good,' which criticised the group and declared a 'National Bible Year.'[47] Clearly this was a collective acceptance of the threat of fundamentalist groups and an attempt to protect its own fold from further drifting to the other side.

4.2.2 El Shaddai, other Catholic renewal movements and Opus Dei

The upsurge of El Shaddai, a Catholic charismatic movement, paralleled the Born Again movement and other fundamentalist groups, although it also created some tensions within the Catholic Church. The genesis of El Shaddai was founded on Mariano (Brother Mike) Velarde's 'miraculous healing' of a heart condition in February 1978. Brother Mike, a failed real estate developer, acquired the radio station DWXI in an effort to spread the Good News. In 1981, Brother Mike started a regular radio programme (through DWXI) that became successful. In 1984, the radio listeners were invited to a Mass and healing session with Brother Mike. This small assembly (about a thousand) started the regular gathering of El Shaddai. Thus the DWXI Prayer Partners Foundation International (PPFI) was launched, and later acquired its full title 'El Shaddai-DWXI-PPFI.' It is basically a lay-led movement whose members come mostly from the working class. By 1995, around 1,300 local chapters have been established and 61 international chapters were set up in 25 countries.[48] Some eight to ten million members are estimated to be members of El Shaddai making it the largest new religious movement in the Philippines and possibly all around the globe.[49] El Shaddai's political significance was laid bare when it took political choices that run counter to the official position of the Catholic Church. Although not as cohesive as the INC, Brother Mike commands a vast influence over his flock. In an effort to bridge the gulf between the Church hierarchy and El Shaddai, representatives of the CBCP met

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[47] Ibid.
[48] Gorospe-Jamon, 'The El Shaddai prayer movement..., 87; See also Esmeralda Fortunado-Sanchez, 'The Experiences of several members of El Shaddai-DWXI-PPFI: a phenomenological study.' A paper presented at the 2002 CESNUR International Conference, Salt Lake City and Provo (Utah), 20-23 June 2002.
[49] Gorospe-Jamon, 'The El Shaddai prayer movement..., 88. Another estimate claims that El Shaddai has six million members. See U.S. Department of State, 'Annual Report on international religious freedom for 1999.' Released by the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Washington, D.C., 9 September 1999.

Brother Mike in 1993 and ironed out a number of issues dividing the two parties. Bishop Teodoro Bacani became El Shaddai's spiritual adviser along with a host of priests including Fr. Anton Pascual. Despite efforts to close ranks, tensions persisted between the two.

El Shaddai's theological orientation generally follows mainline Catholic teaching while stressing some religious attitudes and practices. Like any charismatic movement, it has a tendency to over-spiritualise the human condition which can lead to depolitisation. In one survey, 72.9% of the respondents claim they pay their tithes religiously because they believe that blessings will go back to the giver.[50] El Shaddai stresses the need for personal conversion as more crucial than structural transformation of society.[51] Brother Mike's dynamic preaching coupled with theatrics, popular bywords and personal touch of the *masa* (masses) is highly esteemed. In a survey conducted, 70.5% of the respondents 'believe in everything that Velarde says.'[52] Politicians seek his endorsement during election period because of his *masa* appeal over the members. Finally, El Shaddai seeks to follow the principle that the believer must obey incumbent authorities (church and state) since they all emanate from God.[53] However, the movement became politicised and held political choices that challenged the Church and State.

Middle class Catholic charismatic movements, although not as numerous as El Shaddai, likewise grew during the post-Marcos period. These movements included the Couples for Christ (CfC), *Ligaya ng Panginoon* (Joy of the Lord), Bukas-loob sa Diyos (Generosity to God) and Brotherhood of Christian Business and Professionals. Of these movements, the CfC was most involved in the anti-Estrada campaign along with civil society actors.

Apart from the charismatic communities, the growth of Opus Dei in the Philippine Church has been extraordinary in the recent past. The Opus Dei, founded in 1928, rose to prominence particularly during the Pontificate of John Paul II. In 1982, the Pope declared the

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[50] Gorospe-Jamon, 'The El Shaddai prayer movement..., 107.
[51] Ibid., 113.
[52] Ibid. 109.
[53] Ibid., 114.

Opus Dei as a personal prelature.[54] Its founder, Josemaria Escrivá de Balaguer, who died in 1975, was beatified in 1992 and declared a saint ten years later.[55] Governed by its own statutes and norms, Opus Dei's 80,000 members (ordained ministers and lay people) come from every continent in the world and do not fall under conventional groupings (e.g., religious orders and congregations, traditional associations and movements) within the Church and are governed by their own statutes and norms.[56] In 1964, the Opus Dei started in the Philippines and has since then gradually increased its membership and establishments. It is known for its conservative understanding of the Catholic faith and rigid observance of church teaching. Its members are highly educated, top professionals and coming mostly from the middle class and rich families. They run the country's most expensive schools and some of their members are quite influential in ecclesial and government circles. Bernardo M. Villegas, a Harvard University trained economist and prominent Opus Dei member was a former Constitutional Commissioner. He was influential in crafting the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Land (CARL) seen by many agrarian reform advocates as a 'conservative version' of reform.[57] He used to head the Center for Research and Communications (CRC) (later to become the University of Asia and the Pacific), an Opus Dei-inspired establishment known for its influence in policy making that embodies neo-liberal values (e.g., free-market economy). It is said that he lobbied intensely for a 'conservative version' of CARL at times using Catholic doctrines to back his position, while other noted church personalities (e.g., Jesuit priest Joaquin Bernas) supported a more liberal version.[58] Another Opus Dei member and Harvard University educated Jesus P. Estanislao served as

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[54] A 'personal prelature' is designed 'to promote an appropriate distribution of priests, or to carry out special pastoral or missionary enterprises....' (See *The Code of Canon Law*, 65). While in many cases the faithful belong to a territorial jurisdiction (e.g., diocese), members of the Opus Dei are juridically under this personal prelature. The Pope appoints a prelate (normally a bishop) to govern the prelature in accord with the statutes approved by the Apostolic See. The declaration became effective the following year.

[55] Beat Müller, 'Information Handbook on the Opus Dei Prelature,' available from http://www.geocities.com/info_opus_dei/opus-dei-en.htm, 30 June 2003.

[56] Ibid.

[57] James Putzel, *A Captive land: the politics of agrarian reform in the Philippines*, (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1992), 181-183, 205-209.

[58] Ibid.

Cabinet Secretary[59] to President Aquino, and as an adviser to President Ramos during the 1996 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

The significant rise of these Catholic charismatic communities and the Opus Dei speaks of the plurality of forces and ecclesiological divides within the Church. If the tendency of these charismatic movements is to focus on community fellowship, spontaneity in faith expression and spiritual consolation, the Opus Dei stresses Christian education for personal conversion, strict observance of orthodox church teaching (often interpreted in its depoliticised form), and rigorous practice of faith and morals. In both cases, there is a tendency to dichotomise spiritual and temporal affairs by privileging the importance of the former over the latter. Both tend to de-emphasise Catholic social teaching and are less enthusiastic about rectifying acute class inequality. Both are hesitant to involve the Church in politics, although its moral position often has political implications. Other actors within the Church, having disparate ideological and political inclinations, are critical of both orientations (See 3.2.5 in Chapter Three). Clearly this plurality of church actors indicates that decades after Vatican II and one hundred years of Catholic social teaching did not resolve competing tendencies within the Church.

4.3 The Church's support for the 1987 Constitution

The 1973 Constitution was not properly ratified and largely tailored to legitimise the authoritarian regime. President Aquino spared no time in abolishing it and ruled by Presidential Decrees under the so-called 'Freedom Constitution.'[60] She convened a forty-eight member Constitutional Commission, although the general public would have wanted an election of its

[59] Estanislao first became the Secretary of Economic Planning and Director General of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), and then as Secretary of Finance, two key positions that addressed the economic recovery programme of the government.

[60] On March 25, 1986, Aquino officially declared her provisional constitution (Freedom Constitution), until the new constitution was ratified. In the meantime, she ruled by presidential decrees, abolished the National Assembly (*Batasang Pambansa*), and restored the Bill of Rights. See Wurfel, *Filipino politics*..., 309.

members.[61] The Constitutional Commissioners included a wide range of representation from the NGO sector, political groups including Marcos's KBL and activists from the Left, academic establishments, sectoral formations, business and professional groups and many others. The Catholic Church did not have official representatives but had people, likewise coming from different segments of the ecclesiological spectrum, who were identified with it: Bp. Teodoro Bacani, Jesuit priest Joaquin G. Bernas, activist Good Shepherd nun Christine Tan, and lay leaders like Ambrosio Padilla, Francisco Rodrigo, Opus Dei economist Bernardo Villegas and Wilfrido Villacorta.[62] Likewise, Rev. Cirilo Rigos, a pastor of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) was identified with the Protestant Church.[63]

The draft Constitution received full backing from the CBCP when it secured its own interests: a pro-family stance, anti-abortion, anti-divorce and anti-death penalty provisions, openness to religious instruction in government schools, human rights protection, social justice provisions, and safeguards against declaration of martial law.[64] Cardinal Sin was particularly elated with the draft, although some church leaders had some misgivings about it.[65] The CBCP in their pastoral letter of November 21, 1986 while 'aware of the imperfections of the draft Constitution,' appealed for an educational campaign to inform people about the new Constitution and recommended its ratification.[66] Clearly the CBCP was not content on seeking its ratification as a public conferral of legitimacy on the Aquino presidency, although this was necessary. President Aquino's campaign slogan was: 'Yes to Cory! Yes to Democracy! Yes to the Constitution!' while those opposed cried: 'No to Cory! No to Communism! No to the

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[61] Jeffrey M. Riedinger, 'Caciques and coups: the challenges of democratic consolidation in the Philippines,' in *Democracy and its limits: lessons from Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East* eds., Howard Handleman and Mark Tessler (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 182.
[62] Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' 435.
[63] Youngblood, 'The Corazon Aquino 'miracle' and the Philippine Churches,' 17.
[64] Desiree Carlos, 'Sin backs Charter, peace talks,' *Malaya*, 05 November 1986, 2. Santos, 'A Short history of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines,' 435.
[65] Youngblood, 'The Corazon Aquino 'miracle' and the Philippine Churches,' 17.
[66] 'A Covenant towards peace: A Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the Ratification of the 1986 Constitution of the Philippines,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1980s/1986-1986constitution.html, 21 February 2003.

Constitution!'[67] The National Council of Churches (NCCP) likewise campaigned for its ratification, but qualified its stance: 'yes, but critical.'[68] The NCCP found the draft strong on human rights, but less satisfactory in many provisions, such as safeguarding 'freedom of religion.'[69] On February 2, 1987, the Constitution was ratified overwhelmingly by 76% of the twenty-two million voters –an extremely high participation rate of 90% of the total number of registered voters.[70] Philippine Churches, particularly the Catholic Church, had a fair share of this victory as they campaigned vigorously for its ratification. The Left, on the other hand, expressed disappointment in the 1987 Constitution and campaigned for its rejection.

The 1987 Constitution underpinned Philippine democracy in the post-Marcos era. First, it was an attempt to mainstream people's participation in a restored democracy. In the Charter, the Philippines is characterised as both '*democratic* and republican state' to underscore the role of 'people power' which toppled the Marcos dictatorship in the February revolution.[71] To this end, 'The State shall encourage non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organisations that promote the welfare of the nation.'[72] In addition, 'The State shall respect the role of independent people's organisations to enable the people to pursue and protect collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means.'[73] The empowerment and participation of organised communities and associations became institutionalised in the 1987 Constitution that mandated the State to 'facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms.'[74] Given this auspicious constitutional backing, NGOs/POs flourished exponentially. It is estimated that from 1986 to 1995, the number of NGOs rose by 160 percent, that is, from 27,100 to

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[67] Mark R. Thompson, 'Off the endangered list: Philippine democratisation in comparative perspective,' *Comparative Politics* 28(2), (1996), 192.
[68] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 47.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Joaquin G. Bernas, '"People power" in the charter,' *Today* 14 February 2001, 8.
[72] *The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines* (Mandaluyong City: National Book Store, n.d.), 3.
[73] Ibid., 49.
[74] Ibid.

70,200.[75] Although these NGOs were of different varieties, their phenomenal increase was a big boost for the civil society movement in the Philippines. The enactment of the Local Governance Act in 1991, principally authored by Senator Aquilino Pimentel Jr., also enabled devolution of power and the participation of NGOs and POs in the localisation of the democratic agenda. Assessment on the Local Governance Act, however, remained mixed: while the possibility of local governance was opened, local patronage politics and clientelism continued.[76] Nonetheless, the fact that NGOs and POs occupied an important place in the Constitution meant that a new wave of citizenship was in the offing. In a way, the 1987 Constitution enlarged the discourse and practice of citizenship to promote people's participation and social inclusion as a new mode of 'people power' in the post-authoritarian context. Although dismissed by many as merely trappings of formal democracy, James Putzel argues that with the growth of NGOs and POs in the Philippines, formal democratic institutions allowed interest articulation and representation of basic sectors of society which otherwise would not have been possible.[77]

Second, the Constitution instituted safeguards against a powerful executive branch to avoid a repeat of political dictatorship. Thus it clipped the powers of the executive branch notably by not allowing the president to seek office for a second consecutive term. A powerful congressional commission was tasked to confirm or deny any presidential appointee to the cabinet. A party list system based on proportional representation for 20% of the congressional seats (51 of the 250 possible seats) was later drawn up to ensure participation of politically excluded but organised sectors of society who have less chances of winning electoral contests.[78] The party list system in principle was a legislative mechanism to secure participation from

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[75] Gerard Clarke, *The Politics of NGOs in Southeast Asia: participation and protest in the Philippines* (London: Routledge, 1998), 93.
[76] James Putzel, 'Survival of an imperfect democracy in the Philippines,' *Democratization* 6(1), (1999), 214. On this point, Sidel argues correctly that local bossism and capital accumulation in the Philippines, a rather widespread phenomenon, does undermine democratisation. See John T. Sidel, *Capital, coercion, and crime: bossism in the Philippines* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999).
[77] Putzel, 'Survival of an imperfect democracy in the Philippines,' 198-223.
[78] David Wurfel, 'The Party-List elections: sectoral failure or national success,' *Political Brief* 6(2), (February 1998), 4.

marginalised groups, although its operation left much to be desired. A small number of the Left and political activists in the 1998 and 2001 elections and beyond would later assume congressional seats owing to the party list system.

Third, the 1987 Constitution gave legitimacy to state apparatuses such as the judiciary as well as legislative and executive branches of the government. However imperfect and weak they were, they restored public confidence and enabled a number of social activists to become part of the very establishment they so despised during the Marcos years. Thus the Constitution reaffirmed the primacy of law, a far cry from the personalistic rule of Marcos.[79]

Finally, the 1987 Constitution enshrined key provisions that in a way induced organised groups and marginalised sectors to participate in framing policies affecting their lives. This is particularly true in the case of human rights and social justice provisions (e.g., agrarian reform).[80] Although the social justice provision in the 1987 Constitution as such is not equated to democracy building in the sense used in this study (see Chapter One), it provided a political opportunity for people to articulate their concerns and participate in framing social policies, a key dimension of democracy building. Provisions on the protection of labour, agrarian reform, urban land reform and housing, health, women and the premium given to people's organisations appear to indicate the Constitution's concern for the marginalised sectors of society, although the legislative translations of these were very uneven. Although the agrarian reform provision in the Constitution was not progressive, it did not stop activists including Florencio Abad (later appointed as Agrarian Reform Secretary by Aquino) from trying to make it work. His appointment increased farmers' confidence and enabled them to participate actively in articulating and lobbying their interests. Nonetheless, many social reform bills were diluted by a deeply cautious Congress and a weak executive leadership that did not exert enough influence on

[79] Mark R. Thompson, *The Anti Marcos struggle: personalistic rule and democratic transition in the Philippines* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995).
[80] *The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines...*, 4-8, 46-51.

the Congress in crafting social legislations. [81] A typical example of this is the Comprehensive Agrarian Land Reform (CARL), a supposedly social reform centrepiece of the Aquino administration that was emasculated when passed by the Congress. On the other hand, the successful passage of the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) in 1992 indicated that it was possible to pass pro-poor social legislation through skilful, persistent and coordinated lobbying efforts of the parties concerned. In UDHA's case, the key players included the Urban Land Reform – Task Force (ULR-TF), the Institute of Church and Social Issues (ICSI), the BBC through Jesuit priest Joel E. Tabora, Cardinal Sin and influential elements in the Congress.[82]

4.4 Defending a fragile democracy

The Aquino administration inherited a deeply politicised and fragmented military arising from its experience of martial law. It survived seven attempted military coups, a rather exceptional case among new democracies.[83] These were led at some point either by key leaders of REFORM[84] the Armed forces of the Philippines movement (RAM) including Lt. Colonels Gregorio Honasan, Victor Batac and Eduardo Kapunan or by Marcos military loyalists, and in some cases jointly by both parties. Although these military mutinies failed, ironically 'they unwittingly scored victories for the Armed Forces as a whole in its bid for more political influence.'[85] As a result of these coups, increasingly the Aquino government favoured collective military interests by acceding to their demands for a large budget allocation, more counter-insurgency operations, and

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[81] Rocamora, *Breaking through...*, 45, 50-53.
[82] Anna Marie A. Karaos, Marlene V. Gatpatan, Robert V. Hotz, 'Making a difference: NGO and PO policy influence in Urban Land Reform advocacy,' *Pulso* 15 (January 1995).
[83] Thompson records 8 attempted military coups. See Thompson, 'Off endangered list...,' 179.
[84] Thompson, *The Anti-Marcos struggle...*, 169. REFORM originally stands for Restore Ethics, Fair-Mindedness, Order, Righteousness. Initially a reformist bloc within the AFP, but RAM became a new political group after the seventh coup attempt. The movement later changed RAM to Revolutionary Alliance for the Masses and presented its comprehensive programme during the peace talks, which appeared no different from that of a political party, see Temario C. Rivera, 'Of guards and gods: the military rebels and the peace process,' in *Ending the armed conflict: peace negotiations in the Philippines* ed. Emmanuel C. Lallana (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies and University of the Philippine Press, 1992), 57, 60-61.
[85] Villacorta, 'Ideological orientation of the political forces in the Aquino era,' 165.

the dismissal of reform-minded elements in the Cabinet.[86] The last and worst attempted military coup in December 1989 was held at bay due to the intervention of US Air Force planes which flew over Metro Manila to prevent rebel planes from flying. These attempted military coups not only hampered the process of democratisation but equally damaged the ailing national economy. Clearly at this point, Philippine democracy was far from Dankwart 'habituation phase' where conflicting interests of actors are sorted within the confines of democratic institutions.[87]

Cardinal Sin assailed the military rebels as 'false messiahs,' but was also equally forceful in pressing the government to introduce much awaited social reforms (e.g., agrarian reform).[88] The Archdiocese of Manila mobilised the people to a gathering of the faithful for a Mass and prayer at the blessing of the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace at EDSA on December 8, 1989.[89] The faithful were enjoined to assemble in their parishes and demonstrate their support 'for peace and democracy.'[90] The coup plotters were condemned. The prayerful event was also intended by Cardinal Sin as a soul-searching occasion and time for repentance for the 'sins that have contributed to this national tragedy.'[91] In his view, the coup attempts were neither purely military adventurism on the part of the perpetrators nor were they simply the government's faults, but partly linked to people's political culture and exercise of citizenship. By rallying the people to defend the fragile democracy, the Church rekindled people's sense of citizenship and vigilance against attempts to erode democratic gains. People's participation in this exercise displayed a fine church *ad intra* (hierarchy-laity interaction) in operation.

In 1991, the AFP Chief of Staff General Lisandro Abadia released from detention almost 100 military officers and rank and file soldiers associated with coup attempts and placed them

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[86] Riedinger, 'Caciques and coups...,' 192-194.
[87] Dankwart A. Rustow, 'Transitions to democracy: toward a dynamic model,' *Comparative Politics* 2 (1970), 337-363.
[88] Amando Doronila, 'Constitution gives Cory a vast arsenal against coups,' *The Manila Chronicle* 08 December 1989, 3
[89] The Shrine was dedicated by the Catholic Church in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary whom the Church believed interceded during the days of the EDSA uprising in February 1986.
[90] Institute on Church and Social Issues, 'People power returns,' *The Manila Chronicle,* 08 December 1989, 5.
[91] Ibid.

under the charge of their respective commanders ostensibly to facilitate peace talks with the RAM and other rebellious factions within the military.[92] Various civil society organisations and church people opposed the reinstatement of the military rebels. Cardinal Sin deplored their release as 'overhasty accommodation' and argued that these coup plotters 'ought to be punished, not reinstated in office, and banned forever from military power.'[93] In the interest of national reconciliation, Aquino supported Abadia's peace efforts, believing that peace based on justice was still a viable option.[94] At this point, the Aquino government was beholden to the military for 'saving' constitutional democracy. This was quite evident in the treatment of coup plotters which 'was typically personalistic and indulgent rather than principled and institutional.'[95]

4.5 The Church and elections

Strengthening democracy entails enhancing institutions that underpin democratic life and processes. A crucial democratic institution is the electoral system which guarantees that elected public officials have a direct mandate from voters. During the authoritarian period, there was little public confidence in the electoral system. Electoral exercises in 1980 (local), in 1981 (presidential), in 1984 (national assembly) and in 1986 (presidential), 'held under the repressive conditions of centralised authoritarian rule, were neither free nor fair,' in the estimation of many political analysts.[96] Low participation, except in the 1986 elections, was expected. In contrast the people including some elements in the Left who had traditionally called for electoral boycott, participated in the electoral system in the post-Marcos period. Moreover, these elections had generally lower violent and death-related incidents.[97] John Linantud claims that the deployment

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[92] Rivera, 'Of guards and gods: the military rebels and the peace process,' 61.
[93] Ibid., 62.
[94] Ibid.
[95] José V. Abueva, 'Philippine democratization and the consolidation of democracy since the 1986 EDSA Revolution: an overview of the main issues, trends and prospects,' in *Democratization: Philippine perspectives* ed., Felipe B. Miranda (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1997), 15.
[96] Jennifer Convoy Franco, *Campaigning for democracy: grassroots citizenship movements, less-than-democratic elections, and regime transition in the Philippines* (Quezon City: Institute of Popular Democracy, 2000), 32.
[97] See Appendices, Appendix 5; John L. Linantud, 'Whither guns, goons, and gold? The decline of factional election violence in the Philippines,' *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 20(3), (December 1998), 298-318, see also

of the military in its increasingly depoliticised state and the active involvement of the Church in electoral reform were important developments curbing electoral violence.[98] The Church's participation in restoring confidence in the post-authoritarian electoral processes particularly in the 1992 and 1998 elections was indeed a significant factor in democracy building.

4.5.1 The 1987 congressional and local elections

The first congressional elections after the ratification of the 1987 Charter were held on May 11, 1987. Owing to the restored confidence in the electoral system, unlike in the 1986 elections, the Church was not organised as an electoral watchdog for the 1987 elections. Having supported wholeheartedly the ratification of the Charter, some elements in the Church leadership wanted to ensure that the elective posts should be given to the people it thought would strengthen democratisation. Cardinal Sin appeared in a TV programme and endorsed 10 administration candidates as a 'moral choice,' despite his insistence that the members of the clergy 'should not campaign for any political party or candidate.'[99] The AMRSP, without overtly campaigning, also came up with its own list of acceptable candidates for the Senate which included three Left-leaning candidates.[100] These manifestations of partisan politics cast a shadow on the Church's credibility as a non-partisan Organisation. Nonetheless, the partisan tendencies did not represent an official church position since the CBCP ostensibly maintained neutrality.

The 1987 elections showed incremental signs of maturing democracy. First, the 85.5% rate of participation showed people's growing confidence in the electoral system.[101] Second, pro-Aquino candidates got 22 of the 24 seats in the Senate and 170 of the 196 seats in the House

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A. B. Villanueva, 'Parties and elections in Philippine politics,' *Contemporary South Asia* 18(2), (September 1996), 175-192.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Clad, 'Priests of "peaceful revolution" committed to new role...,' 42.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Clarita R. Carlos, and Rommel Banlaoi, *Elections in the Philippines: from precolonial period to the present* (Makati City: Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 1996), 143.

of Representative.[102] In effect the Marcos traditional political machinery was dismantled at this juncture. Third, the participation of the *Partido ng Bayan* (Party of the People) and the Alliance of New Politics (ANP), although they failed miserably, heralded the Left's partial re-entry in electoral politics.[103] Since the disintegration of the Democratic Alliance in the late 1940s, the Left has generally boycotted participation in elections.

4.5.2 The 1992 elections

The May 11, 1992 synchronised (national and local) elections were extremely crucial in the transition to democracy. This electoral exercise was the first democratic presidential voting exercise since Filipinos elected President Ferdinand E. Marcos in 1965. Since July 1991, the CBCP had issued a total of four pastoral statements pertaining to the 1992 elections to underscore the significance of the event in the life of a fledgeling democracy.[104] President Aquino endorsed the candidacy of Fidel V. Ramos, her former Defence Minister who stood by her government during the attempted military coups. Ramos, a Protestant in a dominantly Catholic nation, was thought to have been feared by some conservative members and leaders of the Catholic fold.[105] He was a key enforcer of martial law in the 1970s as chief of the Philippine Constabulary (PC). This was still fresh in the minds of people who resisted the Marcos regime, especially to Cardinal Sin.[106] Although the CBCP did not endorse any candidates, Cardinal Sin was perceived to have made a 'whispering campaign' for Ramon Mitra who finished in the 4th place.[107] When it was evidently clear that the INC with its 2 million voting members was supporting Eduardo Cojuangco, Sin released a pastoral letter on April 19 citing issues militating against the candidates without their names.[108] Political observers were quick to notice that Mitra

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[102] Ibid., 144.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Fancisco F. Claver, ' Church: non-partisan but active,' *Intersect* 6(6), (1992), 8-9.
[105] Carroll, 'Cracks in the wall of separation?..., 20.
[106] Rodney Tasker, 'Church militant: religious leaders seek to influence vote,' *FarEastern Economic Review*, 05 September 1992, 18.
[107] Tasker, 'Church militant....'
[108] Ibid.

was not implicated in the criticisms in the Cardinal's pastoral letter. Mitra's defeat sent an unmistakably strong signal that the electorate had had enough of traditional politicians (*trapos*).[109] President-elect Ramos was not perceived as a *trapo*.

By Philippine electoral standards, Ramos assumed the presidency anchored on a relatively weak electoral mandate. Ramos garnered only 23.58% of the votes cast in a six-way contest, meaning, at least 75% of the voting public rejected him.[110] Moreover, the electoral outcome showed that the Marcos allies were alive and well. If one were to combine the votes for Imelda Marcos and Eduardo Cojuangco who were natural political allies, 28.49% of the electorate voted for them, higher than that of Ramos.[111] This plainly showed the resurgence of the Marcos loyalists and supporters.

4.5.3 The Church-based electoral movements

Post-independence church involvement in elections was uneven until the elections of 1984. The 1986 presidential snap elections saw a massive reactivation of the electoral watch group NAMFREL after the Catholic bishops formalised an alliance with business and professional groups. They were traditional supporters of NAMFREL since early 1950s.[112] NAMFREL, being the only recognised electoral movement in the 1986 elections was a very broad formation of sectors covering the business people, academic establishments, the Church, civic groups and other private organisations. NAMFREL, however was tainted with partisan politics when its head, José Concepcion, was appointed as Secretary of Trade and Industry, a Cabinet position in the Aquino government. Further, allegations that it favoured government candidates in NAMFREL's OQC in 1987, tarnished its image as non-partisan.[113] These, among others, were

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[109] Riedinger, 'Caciques and coups...,' 186. *Trapo* is a Tagalog slur for traditional politician. *Trapo* also refers to a dirty rag.
[110] Joaquin G. Bernas, *A Living constitution: the Ramos presidency* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing, Inc., 1999), ix.
[111] Thompson, 'Off-endangered list...,' 195.
[112] Eva-Lotta Hedman, 'Whose business is it anyway? Free and fair elections in the Philippines,' *Public Policy* II (3), (July/September 1998), 145-170.
[113] William A. Callahan, *Pollwatching, elections and civil society in southeast Asia*, Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2000, 88-129.

reasons that prompted church leaders who were involved in NAMFREL to form their own electoral movement.[114] Two important church-based electoral movements surfaced in the 1990s: the Pastoral Parish Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) and Voters Organisation, Training and Education toward Clear, Authentic, Responsible Voting (VOTE-CARE).

PPCRV, a PCP II baby, was a concrete lay response to help build the country's fragile democracy.[115] PPCRV, together with NASSA's VOTE-CARE in no time became a key national electoral watch movement in 1990s. The creation of church electoral watchdogs PPCRV and VOTE-CARE in 1991 marked a watershed in the Church's engagement in electoral reform because for the first time in history, church-based electoral organisations of national importance emerged. Given the fragility of the electoral institution, it was crucially important that the voting public be politically informed and that they participate in the electoral exercise. Thus PPCRV and VOTE-CARE attempted to increase public confidence in the electoral system. Although in practice, a good number of church people (priests including) would still be involved in NAMFREL, both PPCRV and VOTE-CARE being church-based and church-initiated, were ultimately under the Church leadership. Three smaller church-based electoral groups with national scope collaborated with PPCRV and VOTE-CARE: *Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan* (SLB, Church -Servant of the Country) which provided voters' education materials, logistics support and volunteers; Seminarians' National Network for Free Elections (SEM-NET), a network of diocesan seminaries and the Association of Catholic Radio Broadcasters comprising of at least 40 church-based radio stations throughout the country.[116]

PPCRV was the Church's response to the proverbial threat of 'guns, goons and gold' that plagued Philippine electoral politics.[117] PPCRV had three general objectives: 1) 'to draw forth

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[114] Ibid.
[115] Interview with Dra. Zenaida Rotea, former Vice-Chairperson of PPCRV, Quezon City, 18 January 2001.
[116] Claver, 'Church: non partisan but active.'
[117] Apolonio V. Dionisio, 'PPCRV in time,' in *PPCRV National Research and Voter's Education Committee, Bantay Barangay*, (Manila: PPCRV, n.d.), 1.

awareness to the necessity of Christian involvement in Elections 1992 as an integral expression of faith in God and in the human person;' 2) 'to provide fora and materials to inform and motivate the Filipino voter, and to vote wisely and responsibly;' 3) 'to organise, support and/or network with groups concerned in the implementation of a truly democratic election, free from anomalies, so as to uphold the people's will.'[118] Although initiated by the Archdiocese of Manila, with full backing from Cardinal Sin, PPCRV became a national electoral arm of the Philippine Church covering some 54 local Churches all over the country.[119] Henrietta T. de Villa, then chairperson of the Council of the Laity of the Philippines (CLP) headed PPCRV.[120] The COMELEC accredited PPCRV on February 18, 1992 well before the May 1992 elections. Major activities of PPCRV included pre-election preparations such as organisation of coordinating councils (e.g., arch/diocese, district, parish) to recruit trainers and volunteers; voters' education; and information campaign.[121] On the election day itself, PPCRV assumed many tasks such as poll watching, voters' assistance to the voting public, assisting members of the Board of Electoral Inspectors (BEI), ensuring and protecting electoral returns, monitoring electoral exercise, assisting NAMFREL's operation quick count (OQC), and keeping watch during the canvassing of votes in designated places. PPCRV was able to recruit 346,688 volunteers in the 1992 elections.[122] Printed educational materials which were distributed reached 899,435.[123] Public approval of PPCRV was relatively high after the 1992 elections. With 69% level of awareness, in September 1992, PPCRV gained a satisfaction margin of +45.[124]

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[118] 'Faith and fire: the PPCRV way,' A Post election report of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP),' 25 July 1992.
[119] Ibid.
[120] CLP is an umbrella organisation comprising 37 national lay associations and 40 diocesan Councils of the Laity.
[121] 'Faith and fire....'
[122] Ibid. Many of these volunteers were also affiliated with VOTE-CARE. It is very difficult to determine how many members were exclusively under PPCRV or VOTE-CARE.
[123] Ibid.
[124] 'Social Weather Report Survey. Performance rating of institutions,' Social Weather Stations data base, n.d., A critical review of PPCRV and church-based electoral movements based on an urban poor community in Manila is presented by Frederic C. Schaffer. See Frederic C. Schaffer, 'Clean elections and the "great unwashed": electoral reform and class divide in the Philippines. A Paper delivered at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, August 30 – September 2, 2001, 09 September 2001.

VOTE-CARE was conceived in October 1991, eight months after the celebration of PCP II, when the bishops and the social action directors expressly desired to participate in the 1992 elections. In the National Social Action General Assembly (NASAGA), Edilberto Calang Guyano, then a new staff of NASSA, was tasked to conceptualise the programme.[125] Some 550,000 volunteers were recruited by NAMFREL, PPCRV and VOTE-CARE for the 1992 elections.[126] Many volunteers in the 1992, 1995 and 1998 elections assumed double affiliations (PPCRV and VOTE-CARE), even triple memberships including NAMFREL.[127] VOTE-CARE's primary goal along with that of PPCRV was voters' education.[128] The voters' education was aimed not only to make the electoral exercise peaceful, clean and honest, but meaningful, namely, enabling the voters to shift from patronage-based to issue-based politics.[129] VOTE-CARE, like PPCRV, was accredited by COMELEC, a positive recognition that these citizens' electoral organisations were allies of the government in ensuring electoral confidence.

PPCRV and VOTE-CARE were basically led by the lay leaders (e.g., de Villa and Guyano) with the support and participation of the bishops, members of the clergy and religious orders and congregations. The conceptualisation of their programmes was mainly done by lay people.[130] Its operations were largely conducted by lay people in conjunction with church leaders in the national and local areas. In this way, the two electoral watch groups exemplified church *ad intra* (hierarchy-laity) interaction making the project truly a church endeavour.

The 1992 elections were relatively peaceful compared with the elections during the authoritarian period, although incidents of cheating and election-related violence were reported. Some 87 violent incidents and 60 deaths were reported, a significant improvement on the 296

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[125] Interview with Edilberto Calang Guyano, NASSA Project Officer, Manila, 07 February 2001.
[126] Callahan, *Pollwatching, elections and civil society in southeast Asia*, 90.
[127] Rotea interview, 18 January 2001.
[128] Edilberto Calang Guyano, 'Citizens for clean polls: partners for hope,' *NASSA News* XXIII(2), (March-April 1995), 17.
[129] Callahan, *Pollwatching, elections and civil society in southeast Asia*, 89.
[130] Interview with Gerry Lopez, PPCRV Administrative Officer, Manila, 15 January 2001; Rotea interview, 18 January 2001.

violent incidents and 153 deaths in the 1986 elections or to the 1984 elections where 918 counts of violence and 154 deaths were recorded.[131] Thanks to PPCRV's candidates forum, the programmes of the candidates were scrutinised by the voting public.[132] The signing of 'peace covenants' among candidates was institutionalised by electoral watch movements making the candidates promise to desist from using violence and respect the electoral outcome. Honouring the covenants was another thing, but at least they sealed their intent under the watchful eyes of the citizenry. It is difficult to ascertain the impact of PPCRV and VOTE-CARE's voters' education campaign which included tri-media exposure. Nonetheless, the information campaign did create an alternative venue of debate and discussion, other than the campaign issues raised by the candidates themselves. Poll watching was the main event for PPCRV and VOTE-CARE on election day itself.[133] Voters' assistance desks were set up in polling places making PPCRV's presence visible and assistance readily available when voters were in need of help. In many cases where members of the Board of Electoral Inspectors (BEI) were not around, PPCRV volunteers assisted.[134] Citizens' political education was initiated by both PPCRV and VOTE-CARE, but unfortunately this was not sustained beyond the election period.[135]

4.5.4 The 1995 congressional and local elections

The 1995 elections, like the 1992 elections, were relatively smooth, despite some 97 counts of violent incidents and 73 reported deaths.[136] A new technique of electoral fraud, namely, Operation *Dagdag-Bawas* (vote padding and shaving),[137] was uncovered, but the case was never

[131] Linantud, 'Whither guns, goons, and gold?..., 301. See Appendix 5, Appendices
[132] 'Faith and fire...,' 4.
[133] Ibid., Guyano interview, 07 February 2001.
[134] 'Faith and fire...,'
[135] Interview with Sr. Rosanne Mallilin, SPC, Executive Secretary, NASSA, Quezon City, 10 February 2001; 'The First PPCRV National Convention: first 100 days report of the national leadership,' San Carlos Seminary Complex, Guadalupe, Makati, Metro Manila, 17-18 October 1992.
[136] Linantud, 'Whither guns, goons, and gold?..., 301.
[137] This is a scheme of vote rigging whereby votes are added to losing candidate(s) and votes are subtracted from winning candidate(s).

settled.[138] PPCRV and VOTE-CARE were both engaged in the 1995 congressional elections, but not to the extent that they did in 1992 and later in 1998. PPCRV had 270,000 volunteers (from 368,455 in 1992) while VOTE-CARE recruited 250,000 members.[139] Once again many PPCRV and VOTE-CARE volunteers assisted NAMFREL's OQC.[140] Having successfully made the 1987 and 1992 elections, the 1995 elections were not perceived as a crucial electoral exercise. PPCRV, for its part, lost members to political parties that hired volunteers.[141] Political parties paid generously their volunteers, whereas PPCRV did not have enough funds for its members. These developments probably help to explain why in June 1995, PPCRV's level of awareness dropped slightly to 66% (from 69% in 1992) and its satisfaction margin slid down to +34 (from +45 in 1992).[142]

4.5.5 The 1998 elections

The CBCP in July 1997 issued 'Pastoral Exhortation on Philippine Politics', a lengthy exposition clarifying the nature of church's political involvement. The pastoral exhortation once again affirmed that the Church's political involvement is principally rooted in religious and moral motives derived from the Sacred Scriptures, Vatican II and PCP II.[143] An outcome of this exposition was a resolution issued by NASAGA mandating VOTE-CARE to focus on 'political education for critical and responsible voting' in between elections.[144] The programme began in October 1997, which was relatively late for the May 1998 elections. The political education conducted by both PPCRV and VOTE-CARE in the 1998 elections did not seem to make an impact since the voting public still elected a number of people on the basis of personal popularity and not in terms of the programmes they represented.[145] This appears to be a significant

[138] Carlos and Banlaoi, *Elections in the Philippines...*, 151-155.
[139] Callahan, *Pollwatching, elections and civil society in southeast Asia*, 90.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Lopez interview, 15 January 2001.
[142] 'Social Weather Report Survey. Performance rating of institutions.'
[143] CBCP, *Pastoral exhortation 1997: Philippine politics* (Pasay City: Paulines Publishing House, 1997).
[144] Guyano, 'VOTECARE Program Report..., 14.
[145] Guyano interview, 07 February 2001.

limitation of the PPCRV and VOTE-CARE campaigns, but given the political machineries, deeply entrenched political base of many traditional politicians, and the resources that sustained their political clout, personality-based politics was still the order of the day. In addition, PPCRV and VOTE-CARE were reactivated when the election period was getting close (around six months before the elections). This meant that they needed more time to launch their pre-elections activities. Further, given the time constraints, the success of voters' education was uneven and largely dependent on the skills and knowledge of the staff giving the seminars. Voters' seminars often were conducted in a non-participatory way.

Nevertheless, PPCRV and VOTE-CARE in general were involved in a systematic and extensive way in the 1998 presidential elections. PPCRV was engaged in sanitising voters' registration, voters' education, recruitment of volunteers, poll watching, and all the other activities they did in the 1992 elections. In many cases, PPCRV had more national projection in the media, volunteers and extensive network while VOTE-CARE had more financial resources, better educational and more progressive materials for voters' education.[146] PPCRV sent volunteers to 57 out of 79 or 72% of the total number of arch/dioceses.[147] VOTE-CARE supported financially 42 out of 79 (53% of the arch/diocesan social action centres) a total of $156,100 with an average of $3,700 per local Church.[148] In February 1998 PPCRV garnered a relatively high +49 trust rating while VOTE-CARE had +26 which showed positive recognition in what they were doing, the former more than the latter.[149]

Mainline Church sentiment was apprehensive that popular action movie star Joseph 'Erap' E. Estrada would be elected as President. Although not officially articulated by the

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[146] Ibid.; Lopez interview, 15 January 2001. See Schaffer 'Clean elections and the "great unwashed"....' for an opposing view.
[147] 'Report of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) to the Commission on Elections and to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the conduct of the May 11, 1998 national and local elections,' n.d., 3-4.
[148] Guyano, 'VOTECARE Program Report..., 14-15.
[149] 'Social Weather Report Survey. Performance rating of institutions.'

Church, short of mentioning his name, it campaigned against Estrada on the basis of his known lifestyle and moral values.[150] In their Sunday homilies, priests exhorted the faithful to vote for morally upright candidates.[151] This was perceived as a campaign against Estrada. These attempts to erode popular sentiments for Estrada proved unsuccessful. Estrada remained very popular particularly with the poor. He successfully projected himself as a crime-buster when he was in charge of the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission (PACC) as Vice President to President Ramos. He also built an image, perhaps owing to his movies, as an action man not identified with the *trapos*. Most importantly he was commonly identified with the *masa* (masses). Estrada's campaign rhetoric, *Erap para sa mahirap* (Erap for the poor) captured the sentiments of the *masa*. Much to the chagrin of the Church, the INC and El Shaddai supported Estrada. Shortly before the election, Estrada declared: 'Brother Mike is more influential than Cardinal Sin, that's why I'm choosing him as my spiritual adviser and with him around, the country can't go wrong.'[152] Given his popularity plus a well-oiled political party, *Laban ng Makabayang Masang Pilipino* (LAMMP, Struggle of the Nationalist Filipino Masses), supported by business tycoons including Lucio Tan and Eduardo Cojuangco, he won nearly 40% of the total votes cast, largely from poorer classes.[153] In a ten-candidate contest, the administration candidate former House Speaker José de Venecia could only collect close to 16% of the voters.[154] Alfredo Lim, backed publicly by Corazon Aquino and Cardinal Sin, finished a poor fifth garnering only 8.7% of votes.[155] Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ran successfully for Vice-President under the Lakas-NUCD party securing some 50.2% of votes cast, more than Estrada's votes.[156]

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[150] See Belinda A. Aquino, 'Filipino elections and "illiberal" democracy,' *Public Policy* II(3), (July/September 1998), 8.
[151] Montinola, 'Parties and accountability in the Philippines,' 128.
[152] Gorospe-Jamon, 'The El Shaddai Prayer Movement..., 89.
[153] Mahar Mangahas, *SWS Surveys in the 1998 national elections* (Quezon City: Social Weather Stations, 1998), 124.
[154] Montinola, 'Parties and accountability in the Philippines,' 128.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Riedinger, 'Caciques and coups...,' 207.

More than any of the elections prior to 1998, quite a significant number of athletes, movie stars, and showbiz (show business) celebrities were elected to public office leading one political observer to label the phenomenon as 'star-isation not democratisation.'[157] Another take of the 1998 elections sees not so much the triumph of 'personality politics' as its linkage with money and political machinery which increased one's chances of securing public office.[158] However one views it, clearly in the Philippine electoral experience, given its weak party system and lack of unifying ideological programme distinguishing the manifold political parties, there is a proclivity to focus less on the programmes and party lines that the candidates represent. PPCRV and VOTE-CARE's candidates' forum and voters' education attempted to address these issues, but failed to some degree.

4.5.6 The electoral watchdogs: tensions and synergies

The relationship between the PPCRV and VOTE-CARE was not always smooth. In some cases, tensions and competitions arose mainly from 'personality conflicts' and 'turf battles' particularly among the leaders based in Manila.[159] The COMELEC's mandate to both the PPCRV and VOTE-CARE were similar: voters' education, assistance to voters on election day, poll watching and assistance to NAMFREL's OQC.[160] The bishops as early as January 1992 agreed that each diocese or local Church would decide on which lead group to choose (VOTE-CARE, PPCRV or NAMFREL). Further, they should coordinate efforts amongst themselves and with COMELEC.[161] Nonetheless, their (VOTE-CARE and PPCRV) working relationship continued to overlap and the question of legal accountability when the volunteers had double affiliations was raised.[162] Their relationship was further strained when VOTE-CARE got funding from Misereor,

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[157] Aquino, 'Filipino elections and "illiberal" democracy,' 19-21.
[158] John Sidel, 'Take the money and run? "Personality" politics in the post-Marcos Era.' *Public Policy* II(3), (July/September 1998), 27-38.
[159] Callahan, *Pollwatching, elections and civil society in Southeast Asia*, 91.
[160] Guyano, 'Citizens for clean polls,' 17.
[161] General Secretariat, 'Minutes of the Bishops' 65th Plenary Assembly, 24-25 July 1992,' (Manila: CBCP, 1992), 22.
[162] Edilberto Calang, Guyano, 'Success at the grassroots,' *NASSA News* XXIII(3), (May-June 1995), 11 & 12.

a German funding organisation, and PPCRV did not. This led to the impression that NASSA blocked PPCRV's bid. NASSA's Executive Director Bp. Claver rectified this impression in a CBCP meeting.[163] The bishops thought of fusing the two parties on the national level, but this was unsuccessful.[164] In January 1997, it was resolved in the bishops' meeting that PPCRV would handle the election activities while VOTE-CARE tackle voters' education in between elections, and let NAMFREL take charge of its OQC.[165] While the overlapping of tasks still continued in the 1998 elections, these electoral movements in general collaborated with each other and accomplished their respective mandates from the bishops.[166] To simplify the operations in many dioceses, the volunteers held the PPCRV, VOTE-CARE and at times NAMFREL identification cards.[167] They used the appropriate ID card when they assumed various tasks.

PPCRV, associated with known personalities such as COMELEC Commissioner Haydee Yorac and CLP head Henrietta T. de Villa, PPCRV chairperson, had more extensive media exposure compared with VOTE-CARE, but the latter, since it was not parish-based, enjoyed the confidence of other volunteers who were not necessarily Catholics (e.g., Muslims and Protestants) and non-practicing Catholics.[168] PPCRV, owing to the fact that Cardinal Sin had a hand in it, was initially under the Archdiocese of Manila and later placed under the jurisdiction of CBCP, although the divide was not always clear.[169] PPCRV held Metro Manila and many provinces while VOTE-CARE focused on the arch/dioceses outside of Manila.[170] PPCRV had the parishes to mobilise, while VOTE-CARE relied on the social actions centres.

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[163] General Secretariat, 'Minutes of the Bishops' 70th Plenary Assembly, 09 January 1995,' (Manila: CBCP, 1995), 30.
[164] Ibid.
[165] General Secretariat, 'Minutes of the Bishops' 74th Plenary Assembly, 9-11 January 1997,' (Manila: CBCP, 1997), 23.
[166] Mallilin interview, 10 February 2001.
[167] Lopez interview, 15 January 2001.
[168] General Secretariat, 'Minutes of the Bishops' 65th Plenary Assembly..., 21-22.
[169] Rotea interview, 18 January 2001.
[170] Guyano interview, 07 February 2001.

The partnership between the Church-based electoral watchdogs and civil society organisations (e.g., NAMFREL) was generally based on their commitment to electoral reform. Despite some tensions particularly amongst the national leadership of the electoral movements, there was cooperation overall on the national and local levels. PPCRV and VOTE-CARE handled the voters' education and activities on election day while NAMFREL conducted its OQC.[171] PPCRV's linkages with NAMFREL and with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) were formalised by way of covenant signing and memorandum of agreement respectively. With NAMFREL, it was agreed that they 'pool together any and/or all their resources in a coordinated manner,' create coordinating councils from national to local, and the division of labour between the two parties, that is, PPCRV would take the voters' education and assist NAMFREL's OQC.[172] With IBP, mutual assistance and coordination was agreed particularly in dealing with legal electoral issues and voters' education.[173] In this way partnership between the Church (through PPCRV and VOTE-CARE) and other civil society organisations (e.g., NAMFREL and IBP) was defined and aimed to strengthen the electoral system.

A number of factors help to explain church-based electoral groups and NAMFREL. First, the historical affinity between the Church and NAMFREL, even dating as far back as in the early 1950s when the latter was created, factored in this relationship. The Church has since then consistently backed NAMFREL's electoral agenda and its unwavering support saw action in the 1986 snap presidential election. Second, aside from the hierarchy's continued pronouncement of support for NAMFREL, some members of the clergy and lay people continued their affiliation with it. The presence of these church people was crucial for the maintenance of their relationship. Third, the electoral agenda was prized highly by both the Church and NAMFREL,

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[171] Ibid.; Lopez interview 15 January 2001.

[172] PPCRV-NAMFREL, 'Covenant of commitment and collaboration,' in "Report of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) to the Commission on Elections and to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the conduct of the May 11, 1998 national and local elections, n.d., unpublished.

so whatever tensions that existed between the two arising from the personalities of their national leaders and competition to win public recognition, these were eventually relegated to the background.

In sum, the Church's involvement in the conduct of electoral exercises in the 1990s revolved mainly around its support for church-based electoral watch movements (PPCRV and VOTE-CARE) and their relationship with NAMFREL, apart from the customary pronouncements it made urging voters to participate in the exercise, to vote wisely and to ensure fair, clean, honest, and meaningful elections. These electoral mobilisations evidently underpinned a new wave of citizenship that enabled people to participate in the electoral process and not something which can be conveniently left to the parties and the COMELEC (a government commission). The church's efforts at citizenship building in this regard seem to nuance two positions that dominate the literature on electoral politics: elections as a 'means of depoliticising populations' and elections as a way of 'widening the sphere of legitimate political activity by demonstrating the illegitimacy of the old regime.'[174] Neither of the two phenomena was fully evident in the Philippine context. The post-authoritarian elections were a political opportunity for mobilising an informed and engaged citizenry with the aid of PPCRV, VOTE-CARE as both interacted with the Church hierarchy alongside other civil society organisations (e.g., NAMFREL, IBP). These electoral movements not only attempted to restore confidence in the electoral institution, but also broadened the issues around electoral politics through political education and participation.

In PPCRV and VOTE-CARE, hierarchy-laity interaction and the collaboration with civil society organisations were generally positive, although their relationship with and among each

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[173] PPCRV-IBP, 'Memorandum of Agreement,' in "Report of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) to the Commission on Elections and to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the conduct of the May 11, 1998 national and local elections," n.d., unpublished.

[174] R. H. Taylor, 'Introduction: elections and politics in Southeast Asia,' in *The Politics of elections in Southeast Asia* ed., R. H. Taylor (Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press and the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1996), 8.

other was fraught with tensions and competitions. PPCRV and VOTE-CARE's voters' education, presence and help at the polling areas, challenging electoral anomalies, poll watching, canvass monitoring, assistance to NAMFREL's OQC were among tasks which earned them consistent recognition from COMELEC (through its accreditations in the subsequent elections) and from the voting public. The voters' education appeared to be an ambivalent area in its campaign as evident in the result of the 1998 elections. Despite emphasis on issue-based politics, many candidates were elected on the basis of their personal popularity and not on the programmes they envisioned. This indicates the deficiencies of their voters' education project. At times some methods and assumptions made of voters' education created a backlash against the very aims to which the electoral movements aspired.[175] PPCRV and VOTE-CARE limited themselves to the election period. Sustaining political education in between elections was a recurrent problem. Consequently political education did not do much to strengthen people's understanding and practice of citizenship. Clerics who were campaigning whether directly or indirectly for some candidates were perceived as divisive and tarnished the credibility of the Church in its avowed claim to be non-partisan.

4.6 Shaping and promoting the peace agenda

A consolidated democracy assumes that 'all politically significant groups accept established political institutions and adhere to democratic rules of the game.'[176] In post-authoritarian regimes, armed groups waging their political and ideological crusades bear signs of resistance against the democratic institutions. Insofar as armed conflict persists, the prospects of strengthening democracy diminish greatly. Peace is an important, if not necessary, condition for democracy building. The intense clamour for peace started almost immediately after Aquino

[175] Frederic Charles Schaffer, 'Clean elections and the "great unwashed"....'
[176] Burton, Gunther and Highley, eds., *Elites and democratic consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe*, 3.

rose to power. Owing to their high level of acceptability by warring groups, the Church and peace advocates (groups and individuals) played vital roles in initiating peace efforts.

4.6.1 Church's engagement with the State and insurgency movement

The insurgency movement in the Philippines led by the CPP-NPA is one of the longest running in the world. Shortly after the CPP was established in 1968, its armed-wing, the NPA, was formed. During the Marcos period, no peace negotiation with the CPP-NPA was attempted. Like many Latin American Churches, immediately after the *abertura* (political liberalisation),[177] the Philippine Church was a key player in brokering peace deals. Soon after assuming her office as President, Aquino sought the assistance of the Church in a bid to end the conflict with the CPP-NDF-NPA.[178] This invitation fitted in well with the Pope's exhortation urging the bishops in the wake of the February revolution (People Power I) to be ministers of reconciliation.[179] The CBCP enjoined the people to promote 'national reconciliation, unity, and peace.'[180] National reconciliation was relatively high on the agenda of the Church immediately after the ouster of Marcos. Less than a month after the February Revolution, twenty-two bishops met to assess their relationship with the new government and insisted that the task of national reconciliation should be based on justice.[181] They suggested as an initial step the abolition of the notorious Civilian Home Defence Forces (CHDF).[182] Aquino tried to abolish the para-military CHDF in 1987 but failed due to strong objections from the military. CHDF was later converted into the Civil Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGUs) upon the insistence of senior military officers that these units were 'a cost-effective counterinsurgency strategy.'[183] Thus 89,000 civilians became members of CAFGUs by 1992, notwithstanding a constitutional prohibition on

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[177] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America.*
[178] Youngblood, 'The Corazon Aquino "miracle" and the Philippine Churches,' 19.
[179] *L'Osservatore Romano*, 'Pope's letter to bishops of (the) Philippines....'
[180] 'One hundred days of prayer and penance for national reconciliation, unity and peace,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1980s/1986-100days_prayer.html, 27 March 2003.
[181] Claver, 'The Religious sector and the new government,' 365.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Silliman, 'Human rights and the transition to democracy,' 123.

para-military groups as 'not consistent with the citizen armed force' in the 1987 Charter.[184] Although the CAFGUs were placed under direct supervision of the military, de facto, there was no noticeable fundamental change in terms of reining in their human rights violations.[185]

Striking a peace settlement with the CPP-NDF-NPA was the most precarious and difficult of all the armed groups. Despite objections from Defence Minister Enrile, who reflected the sentiments of the military and the Pentagon, the Aquino administration started peace initiatives with communist rebels by releasing 500 political detainees which included top leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines including José Maria 'Joma' Sison.[186] In May 1986, preliminary discussions between the two groups (GRP, Government of the Republic of the Philippines and NDF) started leading to a negotiated 60-day ceasefire agreement to take effect on December 10, 1986.[187] Two military coup attempts in July and in November 1986, the killing of KMU leader Rolando Olalia in November and Enrile's unyielding criticisms of Aquino's 'kid-glove approach' to communism jeopardised the initial talks between GRP and NDF.[188] Despite the turn of events, a ceasefire agreement was signed on November 27, 1986 while talks were going on.[189] Bacolod Bishop Antonio Y. Fortich chaired the National Ceasefire Committee (NCC) which monitored and supervised the ceasefire agreement. Subsequently, 14 regional and 7 local ceasefire committees were formed.[190] For the first time ever since the beginning of the insurgency movement in 1969, a ceasefire was in place, despite some cases of reported violations. Church-linked organisations such as the Peace Promotion and Monitoring Council (PPMC) and the National Citizens' Peace Monitoring Council (NCPMC) were instrumental in

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[184] Ibid.; *The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines*, 62.
[185] Silliman, Human rights and the transition to democracy.'
[186] Maria Serena I. Diokno, 'Peace and human rights: the past lives on,' in *Duet for EDSA, 1996: Looking back, looking forward*, ed., Lorna Kalaw-Tirol (Manila: Foundation for Worldwide People Power, Inc., 1995), 92; Wurfel, 'Filipino politics..., 311.
[187]Miriam Coronel Ferrer and Antonette Requiza, eds., *Options for peace: summary of events related to negotiating the communist insurgency in the Philippines 1986-1992* (Manila: Coalition for Peace *et. al.*, 1993), 5-6.
[188] Wurfel, *Filipino politics...*, 311-313.
[189] Ibid., 313.
[190] Coronel Ferrer and Requiza, eds., *Options for peace...*, 6.

providing reports to the NCC on ceasefire violations.[191] During the ceasefire period, the NCC dealt with a total of 167 complaints, 9 reported violations, and asked their local and regional committees to handle 21 cases.[192] NASSA served as the NCC secretariat. Maria Serena I. Diokno, a member of the GRP panel, remarks: 'The ceasefire could not have been implemented without the cooperation of the bishops, priests and other religious who served in the national and local ceasefire committees.'[193]

The military coup attempts that plagued the first year of the Aquino administration undermined the peace process. Suspicions and distrusts between the military and the NDF heightened. On January 22, 1987, eighteen demonstrators who were mostly farmers protesting in Mendiola Street leading to the Presidential Palace were killed.[194] This caused an irreversible set back leading immediately to the withdrawal of the NDF from the peace talks. In her address to the graduating cadets of the Philippine Military Academy on March 22, 1987, the nation's premier military school, Aquino, virtually beholden now to the military that contained the coup attempts, vowed to 'unleash the sword of war' against the insurgents.[195] This policy shift in dealing with the insurgents elicited divided reactions from the Church. Cardinal Sin, arguing that 'after compassion, justice should now be dispensed,' threw his support to a military solution to the insurgency crisis.[196] In addition, he endorsed a para-military counter-insurgency campaign in 1986 and 1987, although the CBCP remained consistently leery of such a campaign.[197] Still, the CBCP did not oppose the policy shift of the government. While some conservative elements in the Church hierarchy concurred with Aquino 'that perhaps sterner measures against the Left

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[191] Maria Serena I. Diokno, *The 1986-1987 peace talks: a reportage of contention* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, Center for Integrative and Development Studies and the University of the Philippines Press, 1994), 70.
[192] Coronel Ferrer and Requiza, eds., *Options for peace...*, 6.
[193] Diokno, *The 1986-1987 peace talks...*, 70.
[194] Coronel Ferrer and Requiza, eds., *Options for peace...*, 10.
[195] Ibid., 11.
[196] Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches...,' 58-59.
[197] Jürgen Rüland, 'Philippine democracy in the nineties: structural obstacles and prospects,' in *Economy and politics in the Philippines under Corazon Aquino*, ed. Bernhard Dahm (Hamburg: Institut für Asienkunde, 1991), 348; Villacorta, 'Ideological orientation of political forces in the Aquino era,' 166.

were necessary,' they nevertheless condemned violence.[198] Progressive bishops and clergy members were quick to point out the dangers of employing a total military approach to the crisis.[199] This all-out war against the rebels had devastating effects in the military Thunderbolt Operation in Southern Negros Occidental in April 1989 (see Chapter Six) resulting in a severe criticism by the local Church, AMRSP and church leaders.

In another development, Aquino further deepened her war against the communists by endorsing the anti-communist vigilante group *Alsa Masa* (masses arise) and the *Nagkahiusang Katawhan Alang sa Kalinaw* (People United for Peace, NAKASAKA).[200] The latter was projected as an appropriation of 'people power' because its members were supposedly 'unarmed' and 'law-abiding citizens', but in fact they were armed with *bolos* (machetes).[201] Davao City was considered as a showcase of *Alsa Masa*. Lt. Colonel Franco Calida, a key military proponent of the group and top Metropolitan District Commander in the city, reportedly boasted that there were no communists left in Davao 'just the priests and nuns, and we'll go after them next.'[202] Despite its known human rights abuses, Aquino praised *Alsa Masa* in a visit to Agdao, Davao City on October 23, 1987: 'We look up to you as an example...While other regions are experiencing problems in fighting the insurgency, you here.... have set the example.'[203] Pressed by criticisms, the government later issued guidelines regarding the vigilante movements: no

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[198] Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches...,' 60.
[199] Ibid., 59.
[200] Ramsey Clark *et al.*, *Right-wing vigilantes and U.S. involvement report of a U.S. Philippine fact-finding mission to the Philippines, May 20-30, 1987* (Quezon City: Philippine Alliance for Human Rights Advocates, 1987), 13.
[201] Ibid., 18.
[202] Diokno, 'Peace and human rights..., 95.
[203] James Clad, 'Anti-red vigilantes praised by Aquino,' *Far Eastern Economic Review* 05 November 1987, 43; LCHR, *Vigilantes in the Philippines: a threat to democratic rule* (New York: Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 1988), xv. A US Philippine fact-finding commission led by US Attorney General Ramsey Clark revealed the US involvement in the vigilante movements, through the CIA, to protect economic and national security interests in the Philippines in the post-colonial period extending through the Aquino administration. Further, the report claims that the US government supported the counter-insurgency campaign of the Philippine government through the vigilante movements working with the military. For details see Clark *et al.*, *Right-wing vigilantes and U.S. involvement report of a U.S. Philippine fact-finding mission to the Philippines.*

coercion of members, no criminal elements within the movement, 'exclusively for self-defence.'[204] Nevertheless, these guidelines were many a time not enforced.[205]

While the AMRSP in their April 1987 statement criticised the use of the vigilante groups for the counter-insurgency campaign as 'ill-conceived, dangerous and counter-productive,'[206] the bishops, except a few, were ambivalent.[207] They condemned 'the military's use of armed religious fanatical sects and undisciplined armed vigilantes' but not the whole vigilante movement as such.[208] They argued that some vigilantes were under supervision by the military while others not,[209] and since they were frequently supported by the military for counter-insurgency purposes, they tended to take the law into their own hands.[210] The bishops, however, suspected the links between the vigilante movements and the CIA through fundamentalist right-wing Christian groups but stopped short in condemning these in their January 27, 1989 statement regarding fundamentalist churches.[211] Thus the Church leadership on the whole (excepting some individual bishops, clergy members and the AMRSP leadership), by maintaining an ambivalent position with regard to the counter-insurgency campaign emasculated the peace agenda they so desired.

There were attempts to prod the government and the NDF to re-negotiate after the breakdown of talks in January 1987. The CBCP issued a statement on January 26, 1987, four days after the killing of farmers in Mendiola, urging the government that working for peace

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[204] Ibid., 8-9.
[205] Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches...,' 62.
[206] AMRSP, 'An Appeal for peace,' in *Dawn over darkness: paths to peace in the Philippines*, ed. Ed Garcia, (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1987), 123.
[207] James Clad, 'Priests of "peaceful revolution" committed to new role: politics of the cloth,' *Far Eastern Economic Review* 18 June 1987, 43.
[208] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 182-188.
[209] John McBeth, 'The Church takes a harder look at Aquino government: "critical solidarity",' *Far Eastern Economic Review* 01 June 1989, 31.
[210] LCHR, *Vigilantes in the Philippines...*; Clark *et al.*, *Right-wing vigilantes and U.S. involvement report of a U.S. Philippine fact-finding mission to the Philippines.*
[211] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 189-195; see also Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches...,' 66-67.

necessitates social justice, particularly agrarian reform.[212] Led by prominent members of the Multi-Sectoral Peace Advocates (MSPA) including Senator Wigberto Tañada, Maria Serena Diokno, Edmundo Garcia, SFIC Sister Cres Lucero and Teresita Quintos-Deles, peace consultations were held with members of the Cabinet, while the CBCP, NCCP and AMRSP offered a peace framework agreeable to both the government and the insurgents, but all these failed to engage both parties.[213] The Church joined forces with other organised groups in pressing for a peace settlement based on justice. When the peace talks collapsed, there were attempts at regional peace negotiations through a 'bishop-negotiator' in every region. One attempt in Region XII, headed by Bp Fernando Capalla, achieved a multisectoral meeting consisting of representatives from the government, MNLF, MILF and NDF in Iligan City in May 1987.[214] Bp. Fortich pushed for a local ceasefire agreement in Negros Island, but it was not successful. The NDF rejected local peace talks as divisive.[215]

Following the coup attempts of 1989, the clamour for peace was all the more intensified. Upon the suggestion of peace advocates and the Churches, Aquino proclaimed 1990-2000 as the Decade of Peace.[216] Peace, she claimed, was not simply the 'absence of conflict' but must be coupled with 'authentic development with justice, whose fruits benefit all.'[217] By way of a follow up to the EDSA Shrine gathering, on January 1, 1990, the bishops of Manila in a pastoral letter categorically declared that 'to seize power through a coup d'etat is a sin.'[218] The pastoral letter urged the people to resort to non-violent ways of rectifying the problems of Philippine society. While the bishops of Manila admitted 'abuses and incompetence, graft and corruption'

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[212] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines*, 108-114. This insistence linking peace and justice (e.g., agrarian reform) would again be reiterated in the CBCP's statement on July 14, 1987 where it unequivocally declared that 'to work for peace, we must seek justice by working towards effective land reform.' Ibid., 111-112.
[213] Coronel Ferrer and Requiza, eds., *Options for peace...*, 13.
[214] Diokno, *The 1986-1987 peace talks...*, 82-83.
[215] Ibid., 82.
[216] NCCP-RDO, 'Philippine Churches in the search for peace,' in 'Religion, politics and ideology, *Tugon: an ecumenical journal of discussion and opinion* XII(1), (1992), 96.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Jaime Cardinal Sin and the Auxiliary Bishops of Manila, 'A Pastoral Letter: to seize power through a coup d'etat is a sin,' *The Manila Chronicle* 13 December 1989, 1 & 13.

in the government, the people must use the existing grievance mechanisms provided for in the Constitution.[219] The Manila bishops also urged the government to undertake social reforms while soliciting people of 'solidarity, collaboration and self-sacrifice' to defend constitutional democracy.[220] On January 31, 1990, the CBCP issued a pastoral letter ('Seek peace, pursue it'), following the basic lines of the bishops of Manila in December 1989.[221] Echoing the government's declaration of a 'Decade of Peace (1990-2000), the bishops proposed a 10-point peace agenda.[222] Peace in this context was not simply the absence of war but ineluctably linked to the issues that bred the armed conflict. The NCCP-RDO (Research and Documentation Office) maintains that this was the CBCP's 'most concrete agenda for peace.'[223] The NCCP earlier issued a statement bearing almost an identical title ('Seek peace and pursue it') on October 12, 1989.[224] In October 1990, more than 100 civil society organisations led by the National Peace Conference (NPC), People's Caucus, and the MSPC, Churches (Catholic and Protestant) and Muslim organisations crafted a declaration 'Towards a National Vision for Peace' – the broadest consensus and synthesis on issues affecting peace.[225] Despite many attempts to initiate exploratory talks to re-open negotiations during the Aquino period peace remained elusive. In the meantime, individual church leaders were involved to varying degrees in the formation of 'zones of peace' particularly in Cantomanyog, Candoni in Negros Occidental (next chapter) and in Tulunan, North Cotabato.[226] The local residents declared these areas as 'no war zones' despite the objections of the military and the NPA.[227] Owing to the objections of the

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[219] Ibid.
[220] Ibid., 13.
[221] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 219-227.
[222] Ibid., 224-225.
[223] NCCP-RDO, 'Philippine Churches in the search for peace,' 153. Earlier on, the CBCP had issued statements ('One bread, one body, one people' in 1986; 'The Fruit of Justice is Peace' in 1987; 'Thirsting for justice' in 1987; 'Solidarity for peace' in 1988) linking peace and justice (e.g., land reform). See CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 97-119; 182-188.
[224] Ibid., 96.
[225] Abueva, 'Strengthening the constituency for peace,' 16.
[226] Tulunan has four peace zone areas: Bituan, Miatub, Nabundasan and New Alimodian. The other peace zones included Sagada, Mountain Province; and Bangilo, Malibcong, Abra, see Coronel-Ferrer, *Peace matters...*, 180.
[227] Diokno, *The 1986-1987 peace talks...*, 89.

military officials, the CBCP unfortunately did not endorse the 'peace zones,' although some bishops supported it.[228] People's participation in the peace processes defined a constituency for peace, the single most important outcome in all these efforts.[229] Thus people's participation in peace issues became an important expression of their citizenship. The peace advocates proactively participated, offered their own agenda of peace apart from those of the government and the rebels. The peace movement, however, was not able to translate its influence into votes in the 1992 and 1998 elections.

Immediately after his accession to power, President Fidel V. Ramos renewed calls for peace and reconciliation. In his State of the Nation address on June 30, 1992, peace and security was considered 'the first urgent problem.'[230] He granted amnesty to those who applied for it during the time of the Aquino administration, released 13 NDF leaders, established the National Unification Commission (NUC) and lobbied for the repeal of the Anti-Subversion Law (Republic Act No. 1700) which would legalise CPP and other underground movements.[231] The NUC was an executive-legislative unit created on September 1, 1992, headed by former COMELEC Commissioner Haydee Yorac and Bp. Fernando Capalla, a CBCP representative, who was later elected as its Vice-chairperson. Although political persecutions continued,[232] the repeal of the Anti-subversion Law was an opening for many communist rebels to relinquish the revolution and enter partisan politics or civil society movements for political contestations.[233] The CBCP issued a pastoral statement on January 25, 1993 manifesting its all-out endorsement for the peace process and in particular for the NUC, amid threats of withdrawal from peace talks

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[228] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 197.
[229] Abueva, 'Strengthening the constituency for peace.'
[230] Ibid., 19.
[231] Ibid.
[232] Clarke, 'Human rights non-governmental organizations in the Philippines,' 179-180.
[233] Abueva, 'Philippine democratization and the consolidation of democracy since the 1986 EDSA Revolution...,' 26.

coming from the Left.[234] Although the NUC succeeded in negotiating a peace deal with the military rebels, it failed to make a settlement with the NDF.

President Joseph Estrada's commitment to peace was dismal, despite the rhetoric. Eager to win over the NDF, Estrada set a deadline in his peace talks with the rebels. When the peace talks were suspended, Cardinal Sin in a pastoral letter of March 1, 1999, offered to mediate between the two parties but went unheeded.[235] The peace talks were finally shelved on May 27, 1999 after the ratification of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) (see further below). As a result, the NDF pulled out of the peace talks with the government. With the breakdown of talks between GRP-NDF, an all-out counter-insurgency campaign resumed. In August 2000, Estrada reactivated the notorious the CAFGUs of some 10,000 members from Christian vigilantes.[236] Historically, many Christian vigilantes were driven by religious fanaticism and anti-communism which made them likely recruits to the counter-insurgency campaigns of the military. Although the CBCP was critical of these right-wing groups, individual Catholics including some landed families in Negros supported their anti-communism crusade (widely defined to mean those who opposed the military's counter-insurgency approach to end the armed conflict). Some of these vigilante movements, at times espousing extreme sectarian ideas, were used by the Marcos government to fight against Muslim rebels.[237] Meanwhile, Estrada resumed a thoroughgoing military approach to Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and thus dampening any hope for peaceful settlement in Mindanao during his watch.

In another development, after the breakdown of the GRP-NDF talks and shortly before the impeachment proceeding against President Estrada, on December 6, 2000, a peace agreement

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[234] 'Pastoral statement of the CBCP on peace-building,' in *Pastoral Letters*, Pedro Quitorio III ed. (Manila: CBCP, 1995), 786-789; see also *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Daily Report: East Asia*, 'Church urges action on "fundamental issues",' 25 April 1993, 44.
[235] Jaime Cardinal Sin, 'Pastoral Appeal: A Plea for dialogue, an appeal for prayer,' 01 March 1999, in Nestor C. Cerbo, ed., *On the way of truth: a compilation of pastoral appeals and statements during the 25 years of His Eminence Jaime L. Cardinal Sin as Archbishop of Manila, March 18, 1974 – March 18, 1999* (Manila: Archdiocese Office for Research and Development, 1999), 511-512.
[236] Amando Doronila, 'CAFGUs and human rights,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 02 August 2000, 9.
[237] Ibid.

was concluded in haste between GRP and RPMP-RPA-ABB (Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa – Pilipinas [Revolutionary Party of Workers - Philippines] – Revolutionary Proletarian Army – Alex Bongcayao Brigade), a breakaway faction of the CPP-NDF-NPA. This deal was concluded in the town of Don Salvador Benedicto (northwest of Bacolod City), a political turf of well-known Estrada ally Eduardo Cojuangco.[238] Bp. Camilo Gregorio as a member of the GRP Panel did not sign the document presumably because he was no longer the bishop of Bacolod Diocese at that time.[239] As a gesture of goodwill, President Estrada released political detainees mostly from the RPMP-RPA-ABB.[240] Civil society groups criticised the 'areas controlled' by armed RPMP/RPA/ABB, the lack of consultation with the people, the role of Cojuangco in the peace deal, and hasty conclusion of the agreement.[241] In the post-Estrada period, civil society sectors urged the Macapagal administration for a re-negotiation of the peace deal.[242] Nonetheless, the issues raised by the civil society groups remained unresolved. The resignation of the newly installed Bishop of Bacolod, Vicente Navarra, as a committee member of the peace panel diminished the credibility of the peace deal in which the Church and civil society organisations demonstrated no wish to participate.

The Church's involvement in the peace initiatives with the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA)[243] and with various politicised military factions[244] that nearly toppled the

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[238] Alcuin Papa and Carla P. Gomez, 'Hopes high for Negros peace,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 24 September 2001, 4.

[239] See 'Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Rebolusyonaryong Partido Manggagawa-Pilipinas/Revolutionary Proletarian Army/AlexBongcayao Brigade,' 6 December 2000, Quezon City.

[240] Hannah A. Papasin, 'Fortich softens stand on Erap,' *Sun Star Daily - Bacolod*, 13 December 2000, 1 & 6.

[241] 'Letter to Honorable Eduardo Ermita,' Presidential Adviser on Peace Process, 09 March 1999.

[242] Papa and Gomez, 'High hopes for Negros peace.'

[243] For details of the peace negotiations see Abrino Aydinan, 'Negotiating for peace in the Cordilleras,' in *Ending the armed conflict: peace negotiations in the Philippines*, ed. Emmanuel C. Lallana (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies and University of the Philippines Press, 1992), 43-54; Coronel-Ferrer and Requiza, eds., *Options for peace...*, 6-7; Youngblood, 'The Corazon Aquino "miracle" and the Philippine Churches,' 22-23.

[244] Riedinger claims that a 'silent coup' had taken place during the Ramos period after military officers were given key government positions. See Riedinger, 'Caciques and coups,' 194-196.

democratic regime was marginal. The peace settlement with the rebel soldiers (RAM-SFP-YOU) was perceived to accommodate largely the demands of the military renegades.[245]

4.6.2 The Church and the US bases, the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA)

Tied in to the question of peace and national sovereignty was the presence of the US military bases and troops in the country. Towards the end of the Aquino administration, the government reviewed the presence of the US bases in the Philippines which was set to expire in 1991.[246] President Aquino, feeling the pressure from the US, wanted to keep the bases.[247] The Church hierarchy did not have an official stand on the issue,[248] but the AMRSP repudiated the US military presence in the country. They maintained that the US bases 'endanger rather than enhance the security of the Philippines.'[249] In addition, they viewed the terms of agreement as 'one-sided' favouring the US government.[250] With the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, Subic Naval base and Clarke Air Force base were severely damaged. Considering the extent of damage, the US authorities were not as enthusiastic as before about keeping them. In 1991, the Philippine Senate eventually voted to reject the agreement for an extension of their stay in the Philippines.

Estrada tried to revive American military presence in the Philippines by lobbying for the ratification of the VFA, although he voted against the RP-US Military Bases Agreement. Interestingly enough, the bishops opposed the VFA after being ambivalent about US military bases during the Aquino period. The bishops may have realised that the country was far more secure at this point than before when it hosted the US bases. The assumptions (premised on Cold

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[245] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 49.
[246] Of the five military facilities in the country, two were most crucial: Subic Naval base, the largest naval base outside of the US, and Clark Air Force Base, the command centre of the Thirteenth US Air Force. These bases were 'a major storage centre for US nuclear weapons' although as a matter of policy these were unconfirmed by US officials. See Clark *et al., Right-wing vigilantes and U.S. involvement report of a U.S. Philippine fact-finding mission to the Philippines...*, 11.
[247] Ibid., 12.
[248] NCCP-RDO, 'Philippine Churches in the search for peace,' 144.
[249] AMRSP, 'On the U.S. military presence in the Philippines,' in *Dawn over darkness: paths to peace in the Philippines*, ed. Ed Garcia (Quezon City: Claretians Publications, 1988), 111.
[250] Ibid., 112.

War discourse) behind having the US bases did not hold water anymore as far as the bishops were concerned. Over time, the Church leaders as a whole became more sceptical about the benefits of having a new form of US military presence in the country. On March 9, 1999, CBCP-NASSA issued a statement rejecting the VFA:

> The VFA is not about peace and security. It is a ploy to ensure the 'forward deployment' strategy of the US by enforcing its globalisation policies in the Asia-Pacific region.....it violates the constitutional ban on nuclear weapons; it surrenders the sovereign jurisdiction of RP laws and courts....[251]

The statement further urged the people to join the March 11, 1999 rally as the Senate deliberated on the issues around the VFA. Signature and information campaigns were launched by NASSA through its network, the social action centres. As early as mid-January 2001, 741,084 signatures were collected from local Churches, Catholic Church establishments and organisations, and Protestant Churches, excluding those that came from non-church establishments and civil society organisations.[252] Cardinal Sin added his opposition to the VFA in his homilies and statements.[253] He deplored the 'vagueness' of the terms in the agreement making it suspect and 'contrary to the Gospel of peace.'[254] Nonetheless, public opinion remained highly favourable to the approval of VFA.[255] On May 27, 1999, the Senate voted an overwhelming 18-5 to ratify the treaty.[256] The bishops in their post-ratification statement vowed to pursue the case in the Supreme Court and monitor the conduct of the VFA.[257]

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[251] CBCP-NASSA, 'Statement against the VFA: A call to the Join Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and on National Defense and Security to reject VFA,' available from http://www.cbcp.net/nassa/liyab.html, 09 March 1999.
[252] Edilberto Calang Guyano, 'VOTECARE Program Report: January 1998 to December 1998,' *NASSA News* 27(1), (January-February 1999), 16.
[253] Jaime Cardinal Sin, 'Cardinal Sin on the VFA,' *The CBCP Monitor* III(11), 06 June 1999, 3.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Mahar Mangahas, 'VFA: Yes; MDT: it depends,' *Manila Standard*, 23 August 1999, 14.
[256] 'Senate's ratification of VFA does not change CBCP position,' *The CBCP Monitor* III(12), 20 June 1999, 3.
[257] 'Is there life after the VFA?' *The CBCP Monitor* III(12), 20 June 1999, 3.

4.6.3 Church peace initiatives in Muslim Mindanao

In Mindanao, efforts were made to strike a deal with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in September 1986 when President Aquino met Nur Misuari, the MNLF chairperson, despite objections from the military.[258] Although peace negotiations with the MNLF in 1986-1987 failed, the government kept an informal ceasefire with the secessionist movement.[259] Bishop Fernando Capalla, then from the Diocese of Iligan criticised the government for the exclusion of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), initially a splinter group of MNLF, from the talks.[260] This led Aquino to extend 'peace negotiations feelers' to other Muslim groups.[261] Still, the exclusion of MILF from the peace talks paved the way for the resurgence of the armed conflict in Mindanao, which to date continues.

During the watch of President Ramos, MNLF rejected initially the creation of the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) as mandated by the 1987 Constitution since according to MNLF this was not what the Tripoli Agreement in 1976 had envisioned.[262] In this peace agreement, full autonomy would be granted to 13 provinces in Mindanao. In a plebiscite on November 17, 1989, only four out of the thirteen provinces voted to be included in the ARMM. Along with the ARMM was the creation of the Southern Philippine Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD) which was originally intended as a 'transitional structure and mechanism' to implement the Tripoli Agreement within the parameters of the 1987 Charter.[263] The SPCPD declared fourteen (originally thirteen) provinces and ten cities as 'Zones of Peace

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[258] Rodil provides some background material regarding the GRP-MNLF peace negotiations. See R. B. Rodil, 'Mga aral mula sa nagdaang mga negosasyon sa pagitan ng goberyno ng Pilipinas at ng Moro National Liberation Front,' in *Ending the armed conflict: peace negotiations in the Philippines* ed. Emmanuel C. Lallana (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies and University of the Philippines Press, 1992), 33.

[259] José V. Abueva, 'Strengthening the constituency for peace,' in in *Ending the armed conflict: peace negotiations in the Philippines* ed. Emmanuel C. Lallana (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies and University of the Philippines Press, 1992), 12.

[260] Youngblood, 'The Corazon Aquino "miracle" and the Philippines Churches,' 22.

[261] Ibid.

[262] Abueva, 'Philippine democratization and the consolidation of democracy since the 1986 EDSA Revolution..., 41.

[263] Marites Dañguilan Vitug and Glenda M. Gloria, *Under the crescent moon: rebellion in Mindanao* (Quezon City: Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs and Institute for Popular Democracy, 2000), 54.

and Development' and 'Consultative and Development Councils' in Mindanao.[264] Muslims and Christians opposed SPCPD for different reasons. As the opposition among the priests in Mindanao stepped up, the CBCP likewise aired its concerns and lamented the lack of consultation regarding the creation of SPCPD but nonetheless, after some dialogue, supported it.[265] The CBCP raised fears about the possible Islamisation of schools, threats against religious freedom, separation of church and state, and the issue of equal representation in the Consultative Assembly.[266] The SPCPD broadened its constituency by including the indigenous peoples.[267]

On January 30, 1994, the government and MNLF signed a ceasefire agreement ending the war that had claimed more than 50,000 lives.[268] Government offers to Misuari proved irresistible to him: the SPCPD Chairman post and the opportunity to run unopposed as Governor of the ARMM, an office he initially despised.[269] Subsequently, Misuari secured both positions. After a year of operation, the SPCPD proved to be ineffective.[270] In June 1996, the government succeeded in striking a settlement with the MNLF under the aegis of the Indonesian government and the support of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), but evidently the broader issues of peace and the root causes of the secessionist movements remained unattended.[271] Disgruntled elements of the MNLF disengaged themselves from Misuari and pursued their struggle through the MILF.

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[264] Ibid., Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 50.
[265] Interview with Fr. Romeo J. Intengan, Provincial Superior, Society of Jesus, Stockholm, Sweden, 29 June 2002; see also Vitug and Gloria, *Under the crescent moon...*, 54-55.
[266] Intengan interview, 29 June 2002; see Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 60.
[267] Ibid., 50.
[268] FBIS, 'Government, MNLF sign ceasefire pact 30 January,' 02 February 1994, 26.
[269] Vitug and Gloria, *Under the crescent moon...*, 46-50.
[270] Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?..., 50..
[271] Rigoberto Tiglao, 'Peace in his time: Ramos-Misuari accord has structural flaws,' *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 05 September 1996, 24-26. Little was achieved during the leadership of Misuari. Consequently, two armed groups pursued their secessionist struggles: the MILF and the Muslim extremist Abu Sayyaf. With the support of the Macapagal-Arroyo administration, the Council of 15 (known to be MNLF officials) plotted to oust Misuari as SPCPD chair and MNLF Chairman before the plebiscite on August 14, and ARMM elections on November 26, 2001. See Carlos H. Conde, 'Misuari back to hills, vows to pursue Moro independence,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, available from http://archive.inq7.net/archive/2001-p/brk/2001/nov/19/brkpol_19-1-p.htm, 11 September 2002.

The concerns expressed by both Christians and Muslim leaders arising out of a series of drafts of the GRP-MNLF agreement gave impetus to the coming together of some CBCP bishops and members of the Ulama League of the Philippines (ULP), headed by Lanao del Sur governor Mahid Mutilan, on July 16, 1996. PDSP leader Norberto Gonzales with PDSP animator Fr. Romeo J. Intengan SJ initiated this meeting.[272] This dialogue eventually led to the creation of the Bishops-Ulama Forum (BUF) that had a strong backing from Secretary of Defense Renato de Villa.[273] President Ramos supported this group and donated some $100,000 from the NUC fund.[274] Over time, BUF included the participation of Protestant Bishops. BUF conducted peace education and advocacy, and supported interreligious dialogue. To dramatise the peace issues, the NCCP and CBCP, NASSA and BUF had a peace caravan from Cotabato to Zamboanga and back again to Cotabato in Mindanao collecting some one million signatures from both Christians and Muslims supporting the peace process.[275] Nonetheless, some of the *ulama* members of MILF who did not belong to Mutilan's group rejected the ULP branding it 'as a counterinsurgency tool of the government.'[276]

In sum, despite some of its limitations, the Catholic Church was generally engaged in peace issues in the post-authoritarian Philippines, comparable with the peace efforts of some Latin American Churches. It was more active in peace brokering during the time of Aquino, compared with the period of Ramos and even less during Estrada's abridged presidency. It was a crucial actor in the 60-day ceasefire in 1986 between the government and the NDF, the first since the insurgency movement started in 1968. It assisted in framing a peace agenda (linking peace with comprehensive social reforms) it offered to the government and the NDF; the

[272] Intengan interview, 29 June 2002.
[273] Ibid.
[274] Vitug and Gloria, *Under the crescent moon...*, 151.
[275] Interview with Bishop Roman Tiples, Former PIC Bishop of Negros and former Chairperson of the National Council of Churches of the Philippines, 09 April 2001, Valladolid, Negros Occidental..
[276] Vitug and Gloria, *Under the crescent moon...*, 153.

government and the MNLF. It persistently pressed the government and the NDF to re-negotiate whenever talks collapsed. It conducted peace education in Mindanao through the BUF.

Three factors contributed to the peacemaking efforts of the Church. First, the demise of the authoritarian period created a euphoria signalling the inauguration of democracy. People were in the mood to give peace a chance. Second, the Church, even before Aquino was catapulted to power, had developed a positive relationship with her during the Marcos years. Aquino sought the help of the Church which constantly stood by her government notwithstanding its failures in social reforms. Third, peace as intimately linked to authentic human development was undoubtedly a church mission in keeping with the Catholic social teaching of the Church (e.g., *Pacem en terris* ['Peace on earth'] and *Populorum Progressio*), Vatican II and post-Vatican II documents. Specific articulations of their 10-point peace agenda are contained in the CBCP's statement 'Seek peace, pursue it.'[277] Fourth, in many peace initiatives of the Church, its partnership (church *ad extra*) with other church groups (e.g., NCCP), and with peace advocates and organised groups in civil society (e.g., MSPA) proved vital in enlarging the peace constituency.

The acquiescence of church leadership, ambivalence towards, and in some cases, endorsement (except AMRSP and some members of the clergy and bishops) of the 'total war' approach of the Aquino administration, the government's use of the vigilante movements, and the position Aquino took in the retention of the US bases weakened its resolve to promote peace. Divisions within the Church leadership in dealing with the policy shift towards 'total war' in the Aquino government, the use of vigilante groups, and the executive position in favour of the retention of the US bases affected hierarchy-lay interaction and church-civil society partnership. These concerns were in accord with US foreign policy in dealing with the insurgency movement

[277] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 224-225.

in the Philippines.[278] Given the rifts within the hierarchy and the Church at large, the Church's position was naturally fragmented causing inaction and often creating an obstacle to lay participation (church ad intra) and partnership (church ad extra) with civil society.

4.7 The Church and human rights advocacy

Democratisation is not only a question of regime change, but also entails the operation of democratic institutions and the exercise of citizenship that protects human rights.[279] By continuing its involvement in human rights issues beyond the transition period, the Church along with civil society actors challenged the political institutions and actors (including armed groups) to address human rights violations and uphold the primacy of law in settling disputes.

The church-military relations after the Church-Military Liaison Committee (CMLC) broke up in 1983 did not substantially improve under the Aquino administration. Mutual distrust between the two parties continued. The harassment and persecution of church personnel particularly of the lay people were perpetrated by the military or by vigilante movements notably between May 1986 and January 1988.[280] In some instances the harassment included the clergy such as in the Diocese of Bacolod where the military spread allegations that 35 priests were party members of the CPP.[281] The military continually accused some of the church establishments of being infiltrated by the Left. On this point, the Church agonised and remained divided on how to deal with the allegation in 1987 that NASSA was infiltrated by the Left.

The human rights record of the military remained deplorable despite the fact that constitutional provisions and institutional arrangements were made to curb abuses. From 1986 to 1991, TFD claims that 19,854 politically motivated arrests, 1,016 extrajudicial executions

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[278] Clark *et al.*, *Right-wing vigilantes and U.S. involvement report of a U.S. Philippine fact-finding mission to the Philippines.*
[279] Diamond, *Developing democracy toward consolidation*, 93-96; Elizabeth Jelin and Eric Hershberg, 'Introduction: human rights and the construction of democracy,' in *Constructing democracy: human rights, citizenship, and society in Latin America*, Boulder, (Colorado and Oxford: Westerview Press, 1996), 2.
[280] Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches ...,' 61.
[281] Ibid.

('salvagings'), and 426 disappearances occurred.[282] During the martial law period, from 1977 to 1986, TFD notes that 21,883 political arrests, 2,491 extrajudicial executions and 709 disappearances were reported.[283] In general though, human rights condition slightly improved during the Aquino administration compared with the Marcos regime. 'Salvaging' had noticeably dropped from a monthly average of 22.65 (1977-1986) to 14.62 (1986-1991) since then.[284] Further, in most of these arrests during the Aquino administration, the political detainees were not held as long as they had been during the days of Marcos.[285] Although the use of torture was frequently reported, unlike during the martial law period, many of these abuses were not institutionally designed in government policies but logical consequences of a highly politicised military coupled with a lacklustre political will of the governing elite.[286]

The CBCP in its July 12, 1988 statement 'Solidarity for peace,' condemned the use of violence by both the military and rebel forces.[287] It further appealed to the parties concerned to end the war claiming that 'violations of fundamental human rights are simply related to the bigger problem of war and its causes.'[288] The CBCP statement on July 11, 1989, decried 'the manipulative use of human rights violations,' that is, 'the reprobation and publishing by one political bloc of violations of human rights not specifically to put a stop to them (despite the rhetoric) but merely to blacken the political image of the other.'[289] The statement charged that human rights issues became highly politicised and ideological rather than focusing on its 'human and moral concern' as the CBCP saw it.[290]

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[282] Silliman, 'Human rights and the transition to democracy,' 114.
[283] Ibid., 107. In analysing the ledger of human rights of the Marcos administration and that of Aquino one must take into account the relative transparency of the latter compared with the former in allowing human rights organisations to conduct openly their activities. One would then expect more documentation of human rights recorded during the Aquino administration compared with the Marcos administration.
[284] Ibid., 107 & 114.
[285] Ibid., 113.
[286] Ibid., 117; see also Casper, *Fragile democracies.*
[287] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 182-188.
[288] Ibid., 187.
[289] Ibid., 200.
[290] Ibid., 199.

During the time of President Ramos, the Church's involvement in human rights diminished steadily. The CBCP hardly made a statement as regards human rights violations. Ramos attempted to abolish the CAFGUs in 1993 and managed to collect 3,600 weapons out of some 11,200 from 558 armed groups.[291] Private armies from some prominent people, however, still continued to operate. Violations of human rights including detention of political prisoners persisted during the Ramos administration, although considerably lower in number compared with previous administrations.[292]

In the period of President Estrada, the Church, human rights groups (e.g., FLAG, Saligan, etc), and other civil society organisations were vigorously involved in the anti-death penalty campaign.[293] Despite appeals for clemency by the international community including the Vatican, European Union (EU), Canada, Amnesty International (AI), Estrada was determined to carry out capital punishment.[294] The CBCP issued a primer on abolition of death penalty claiming that there is 'no moral necessity' for its imposition on heinous crimes.[295] The Church conducted a massive education and information campaign. It organised prayer vigils during the legal review of death penalty cases and execution of those convicted of heinous crimes, and engaged the legislative and executive bodies of the government to review its imposition.[296] The Church aligned itself with human rights groups (e.g., FLAG) and together fought vigorously for a stay of execution of those on the death row. Estrada, at the height of the impeachment proceeding, decided to commute the death sentence of those convicted in the spirit of the Jubilee

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[291] Riedinger, 'Caciques and coups,' 191-192.
[292] Diokno, 'Peace and human rights,' 100; FBIS, 'Says "political prisoners" still exist,' 22 June 1993, 42.
[293] Amnesty International considers the imposition of death penalty a fundamental violation of human rights. See Eric Prokosch, 'Human rights v. the death penalty: abolition and restriction in law and practice,' *Amnesty International* (December 1998), 1-10. In 1992, the Church had already opposed the restoration of the death penalty which the 1987 Charter had deliberately did away with. The death penalty was reinstituted in 1993, but President Ramos did not apply it on those convicted with heinous crimes.
[294] Peter Symonds, 'First execution in the Philippines in 23 years,' available from http://www.wsws.org/articles/1999/feb1999/phil.f06.shtml, 03 February 2003.
[295] 'Life or death? A Primer calling for commitment to life and the abolition of the death penalty,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1990s/1999-death_penalty.html, 24 February 2003.
[296] A total of seven victims were executed beginning with Leo Echegaray (Feb 5, 1999), Eduardo Agbayani (June 25, 1999), Dante Piandong (July 9, 1999), Archie Bulan (July 9, 1999), Jesus Morallos (July 9, 1999), Pablito Andan (October 26, 1999) and Alex Bartolome (January 4, 2000).

Year 2000, but this was perceived to soothe relations with the Catholic Church which was leading the campaign to oust him from office. The death penalty issue deeply divided not only the country as a whole but also the church-civil society synergy: the Church, human rights groups and other civil society organisations versus the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption [VACC] and Citizen's Crime Watch. With the backing of 81% Filipinos,[297] it was clear that the much of the laity did not go along with the position of the hierarchical leadership. In both cases, contestations affected adversely church *ad intra* and *ad extra* linkages.

Through the years, the Church's understanding of human rights has greatly expanded from a strictly political nature (e.g., state repression and abuses) during the democratic transition years to non-political cases (e.g., peace, death penalty, land eviction, migrant workers). The CBCP's December 1998 statement on human rights (the first one since the time of President Aquino), contained 'civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, including the right to development.'[298] In the same statement, the CBCP affirmed the rights of migrant workers, indigenous peoples, women and children.[299] In several cases, the Church along with civil society actors urged the political actors (not only the State) to respond to the crying need for human rights protection. In so doing, the Church was reinforcing the rule of law based on the 1987 Charter. But in the case of the anti-death penalty campaign, its moral position was a crucial element in the debate challenging the death penalty law which was reinstituted in 1993 during the Presidency of Ramos.

4.8 The Church and charter change (cha-cha) initiatives

Two Charter change campaigns were launched in the post-authoritarian period: one during the time of Ramos and the other during Estrada's watch. Both were perceived widely as attempts to

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[297] Mahar Mangahas, 'Opinion polls on death penalty,' *Manila Standard*, 08 January 1999, 14.
[298] 'A Pastoral Letter on human rights,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1990s/1998-human_rights.html, 21 February 2003.
[299] Ibid.

undermine the democratic features of the 1987 Constitution. In both cases, perhaps more intensely during the Ramos administration than during the Estrada government, the Church including its conservative elements and pro-democracy civil society groups stood shoulder to shoulder to oppose the cha-cha campaigns.

4.8.1 Ramos' Charter change (cha-cha)

In September 1995, a draft constitution (to replace the 1987 Constitution) of around thirty-five pages was exposed by constitution expert Fr. Joaquin Bernas SJ.[300] The draft was believed to have been the handiwork of the National Security Council (NSC) headed by General José T. Almonte, a close adviser of President Ramos.[301] Almonte persistently denied the allegation. The draft contained anti-democratic elements such as the weakening of accountability of the executive branch to the Congress, the suspension of *habeas corpus* in cases when public safety is threatened and the absence of any provision curtailing periods of martial law.[302] The whole constitutional reform debate then centred on the contentious provision in the 1987 Constitution which curbed the duration of office for the members of the executive and legislative branches.[303] The 1987 Charter did not allow the president to extend his or her single term of office which was six years. The spirit and intent of this prohibition was based on a lingering 'fear of a repetition of the Marcos phenomenon.'[304] The members of the Senate were limited to two consecutive terms with six years per term. The members of the House of Representatives were allowed three terms of three years each.

Ramos successfully projected himself as a hardworking economic manager and enjoyed relatively high public satisfaction levels.[305] Buoyed by auspicious economic growth in the

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[300] Riedinger, 'Caciques and coups...,' 203.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Ibid.
[303] *The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines*, 8 & 16.
[304] Bernas, *A Living Constitution...*, 7.
[305] Michael Pinches, 'Elite democracy, development and people power: contending ideologies and changing practices in Philippine politics,' *Asian Studies Review* 21(2-3), (November 1997), 112-113.

Southeast Asian region from 1993 to 1997, GDP posted an annual average growth of 4.5% and per-capita income increased by an average of 2.6% annually.[306] The percentage of families under the poverty line was reduced from 40 in 1991 to 32 in 1997.[307] Proponents of cha-cha argued on the strength of Ramos' achievements as an economic manager.[308] Thus the people should decide on whether or not he be allowed to run for the same office beyond the constitutional limits. The People's Initiative for Reform, Modernisation and Action (PIRMA, meaning sign/signature) led the movement to amend the constitution. PIRMA led the Alliance of Concerned Citizens for Empowered Social System (ACCESS), a movement of 40 pro-cha-cha NGOs.[309] On June 23, 1997, PIRMA initially submitted to the COMELEC some 5.6 million signatures in aid of the 'initiative and referendum' clause in the Constitution so that an amendment could be pursued.[310] With the popularity of Vice-President Joseph E. Estrada soaring high, he would be the likely successor of President Ramos, a scenario feared by many supporters of Ramos.

The CBCP on March 20, 1997, issued a pastoral statement declaring the 'inopportuneness' of Charter change.[311] The CLP likewise believed that Charter change initiatives were 'suspect of political and governmental manipulation.'[312] A much stronger CBCP statement was released in August claiming that the real motive of Charter change was 'addiction to power.'[313] Suspicions abounded that Ramos was orchestrating the movement covertly.[314] While he denied he was seeking another term of office, the key leaders in PIRMA, in the legislative and executive branches supporting the move, were closely identified with him.

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[306] Montinola, 'Parties and accountability in the Philippines,' 130.
[307] Ibid. There is basis to believe that the figure is a generous estimation of poverty reduction in the Philippines considering the change of poverty level measurement employed at this time.
[308] Miriam Grace A. Go, 'PIRMA: dead three times over; will it rise again?' *Politik* 42(2), (November 1997), 39.
[309] Ibid., 38.
[310] Ibid.; Riedinger, 'Caciques and coups...,' 204.
[311] 'Pastoral statement on charter change,' *The CBCP Monitor* I(5), 16 March 1997, 3.
[312] 'Laity also against charter change,' *The CBCP Monitor* I(5), 16 March 1997, 3.
[313] 'Addiction to power is the real issue behind Charter change moves – CBCP,' *The CBCP Monitor* I(17), 31 August 1997, 12.
[314] Jonathan Thatcher, 'Church, business turn on Ramos,' *The Business Daily*, 06 September 1997.

Additionally, he did not attempt to dissuade them from pursuing it nor did he categorically state that there would be no constitutional amendment before the 1998 elections.

PIRMA's petition to the COMELEC seeking its assistance for a signature campaign was rejected by the Supreme Court on March 19, 1997, and subsequently confirmed with finality on June 10, 1997.[315] The rules for 'initiative and referendum' as provided for in the 1987 Charter had not been passed by the Congress and so the legal mechanism was inadequate for this purpose.[316] Despite the Supreme Court's ruling, the campaign shifted to convoking the Congress making it into a Constituent Assembly.[317] Public opinion of various sources was largely against Charter change. Two separate surveys, namely, SWS and Asia Research Organisation, indicated 60 to 69% opposition.[318]

The Churches (Catholic and Protestant) along with pro-democracy civil society actors (NGOs/POs, business sector) intensified their campaign nationwide. El Shaddai, while confident that Ramos would step down as President, did not want to provoke the Church or the State. They held a rally staying neutral.[319] Cardinal Sin issued two pastoral letters. The first one released on July 3, 1997 warned against convoking the existing Congress as a Constituent Assembly as this merely showed 'aggrandizement of certain persons and political dynasties...'[320] The other letter was an appeal to support the mobilisation on the National Day of Protest, September 21, 1997, the 25th anniversary of the declaration of martial law.[321] The date of the rally was a timely occasion to remind the Filipinos of the death of democracy. The AMRSP joined in the chorus that rejected cha-cha and supported the September 21 mobilisation.[322] Despite a heavy

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[315] Go, 'PIRMA...,' 39.
[316] Bernas, *A Living Constitution...*, 194-196.
[317] Alan Alegre, 'Dirty dancing with democracy,' *Politik* 4(2), (November 1997), 43-44.
[318] Giselle Barretto-Lapitan, 'The Church and the Philippines,' *Intersect*, 12(4), (May 1997), 25.
[319] Gorospe-Jamon, 'The El Shaddai Prayer Movement..., 90.
[320] Sin, 'Pastoral appeal: "Let us uphold the dignity of the constitution",' 03 July 1997 in Cerbo, *On the way of truth...*' 444.
[321] Sin, 'Pastoral invitation: "Collegial protest against the charter change",' in Cerbo, *On the way of truth...*, 462-463.
[322] 'AMRSP and Mission Partners' statement against charter change,' September 1997.

downpour, some 600,000 people gathered in Rizal Park, Manila, led by former President Aquino, a key Ramos supporter during the 1992 elections, and Cardinal Sin, two prominent figures of People Power I.[323] The Left (e.g., BAYAN) contributed in mobilising their constituents for this campaign, although they rejected the Charter in 1987. This was the biggest protest assembly and the broadest representation of political groups in the post-Marcos era.[324] To dramatise their formation, 50 representatives (including former President Aquino and Cardinal Sin) coming from 12 sectors, 10 national social movements and 8 political parties signed a 'Multisectoral Covenant for Freedom and Democracy,' but unfortunately the unity fizzled out after the issue subsided.[325] An Ecumenical Prayer Service conducted by leaders from different religious groups was followed by a celebration of the Mass. Similar gatherings nationwide were also held to protest the cha-cha campaign. In Cebu, Cardinal Vidal, convenor of the 5th Visayas Region Pastoral Assembly, issued a statement rejecting cha-cha and raising fears of a 'new oligarchy and of another dictatorship' in the offing.[326] Sixty-five dioceses nationwide held some form of protest rally.[327] These rallies involving a million people merely confirmed the strong opposition registered in public opinion.[328] As a result, President Ramos was pressured to back down. Hours before the massive September 21 rally in Rizal Park, Ramos categorically assured the public that there would be no cha-cha before 1998.[329] The Church in partnership with civil society organisations once again demonstrated its capacity to influence and mobilise the people in safeguarding the democratic gains of People Power I. Thus Amando Doronila concludes that 'The rallies (anti-cha-cha protests) further proved that outside of the State, the Church is the only social force capable of mobilising public opinion and protest against any regime....'[330] The

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[323] Pinches, 'Elite democracy, development and people power: contending ideologies and changing practices in Philippine politics,' 104 & 116.
[324] Alegre, 'Dirty dancing with democracy,' 45.
[325] Ibid.; 'People power alive in anti-cha-cha rallies,' *The CBCP Monitor* I(9), (08 September 1997), 3.
[326] Vidal, 'Statement against charter change.'
[327] 'People power alive in anti-cha-cha rallies.'
[328] Ibid.
[329] Ibid.
[330] Amando Doronila, 'Pulling back from the brink,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 22 September 1997, 9.

Church appeared to be the only organisation which could fill in the political gap created by a bankrupt party system, but only when it was allied with civil society.

4.8.2 Estrada's Constitutional Correction for Development (CONCORD)

President Estrada likewise attempted to tamper with the Charter, but using the economic development card. In his State of the Nation Address on July 26, 1999, Estrada openly declared his intention to change the constitution through CONCORD to accelerate economic development. Estrada initially planned to convene the Congress into a constituent assembly for the approval of economic provisions and then set up the constitutional convention to address the political reforms.[331] This was interpreted to mean removing the 'Filipino-First Policy' in the constitution.[332] For others, the economic motivation was simply a veneer over a dreaded political intent: lifting the presidential term cap.[333]

Opposition to Estrada's CONCORD was mounted quickly by the Protestant and Catholic Churches and civil society actors including the Left. CBCP President Archbishop Oscar V. Cruz declared that the Charter amendment 'does not augur well for the redemption of the Filipino as a people.'[334] The Archdiocese of Manila, led by Cardinal Sin, mobilised its flock in a multi-sectoral rally on August 20, 1999.[335] The timing could not be any better since August 21 marked the assassination of Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino in 1983. Corazon Aquino and Cardinal Sin once again led this grand mobilisation.[336] Meanwhile, Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and fifty-eight bishops from the Ecumenical Bishops Forum (EBF), consisting of Catholic and Protestant bishops were

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[331] *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 'Estrada proposes two-step cha-cha,' 10 August 1999,
[332] Romel Bagares, 'No to pol reforms, yes to foreign ownership,' *The Philippine* Star, 12 December 1999, 1 & 5. The 'Filipino-First Policy' means that the majority of land ownership is in the hands of the Filipinos. The constitution allowed 60% ownership of land to Filipinos and 40% to foreigners. Estrada's CONCORD wanted 100% ownership of land by foreigners.
[333] Amando Doronila, *The Fall of Joseph Estrada: the inside story* (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing Inc., and Makati City: Philililippine Daily Inquirer, 2001), 45.
[334] 'CBCP President urges vigilance, wisdom in dissent; assails new Cha-Cha moves,' *The CBCP Monitor* III(16), 15 August 1999, 3.
[335] Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, 'Vigilance is the price of freedom,' Archbishop of Manila, Villa San Miguel, Archdiocese of Manila, 12 August 1999.
[336] Sandy Araneta, 'Sin to join Cory in August 20 rally,' *The Philippine Star*, 31 July 1999, 1 & 6.

united in resisting moves to amend the constitution.[337] Cardinal Vidal urged the faithful to show their opposition on August 20 in unity with the other Churches.[338] Archbishop Orlando B. Quevedo OMI, wrote a pastoral letter for his own See in Cotabato:

> My fundamental objection to Constitutional change is to the dominant economic philosophy behind the changes for economic reform. This philosophy is called *neo-liberal capitalism.* Its instruments are liberalisation, deregulation, and privatisation. *Neo liberal capitalism* is at the very root of the phenomenon of globalisation. Its motivating force is profit. It is materialistic.[339]

Quevedo's misgivings of a neo-liberal agenda in Estrada's CONCORD was one position within the Church. Other bishops concurred with Quevedo's rejection of CONCORD for other and similar reasons. The Church, however, made it clear that it was not against amending the Charter as such since the Constitution is not perfect.[340] Nationwide rallies on August 20 were held simultaneously. In Manila, some 70,000 people led by ex-President Aquino and Cardinal Sin congregated at the heart of Makati, the business hub in Manila.[341] Outside Metro Manila around 160,000 people joined the rallies.[342] The Diocese of Bacolod held the biggest provincial protest assembly with about 60,000 participants led by Bishop Emeritus Fortich.[343] Estrada appeared unfazed by mounting protest. He attended a gathering of El Shaddai members who were celebrating the birthday party of Brother Mike Velarde in Rizal Park, the same day that the national rallies where held. However much it was insisted that the birthday party attended by 700,000 people was not a political event for Estrada's CONCORD, it came across as a counter force to compete with the Makati crowd led by former President Aquino.[344]

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[337] Froilan Gallardo and Blanche Rivera, '58 bishops unite, says no to Erap Charter,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 01 August 1999, 1 & 14.
[338] Ibid., 14.
[339] Orlando B. Quevedo OMI, 'No to constitutional change: a moral stand,' *The CBCP Monitor*, III(17), 29 August 1999, 12.
[340] 'CBCP clarifies its stand on Charter change,' *The CBCP Monitor* II(26), 03 January 1999, 3.
[341] *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 'We're not afraid,' 21 August 1999, 1 & 18.
[342] *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, '160,000 rally outside Metro,' 21 August 1999, 6.
[343] Ibid.
[344] The *Philippine Daily Inquirer* claims the crowd was 300,000. See Stella O. Gonzales, 'They're threatened by changes,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer* 21 August 1999, 1 & 18.

President Estrada set up the Preparatory Commission on Constitutional Reforms (PCCR), headed by former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, to conduct a study on Charter change, but this only bred suspicions that its findings would be changed to favour the administration's position. As expected, PCCR, except for three members, recommended to the President to ease constraints on land and key business ownership, but per instruction of Estrada, set aside political reforms.[345] In the meantime, an SWS survey in June showed that 86% of the people polled were against constitutional amendment.[346] Clearly, PCCR's recommendation went against public opinion.

On September 21, the 27th anniversary of the proclamation of martial law, a number of mass mobilisations, led by militant groups and church-supported organizations, took place in Metro Manila and 31 provinces and cities.[347] The Church in partnership with civil society was a key protagonist in the campaign against CONCORD. In Manila, following the instruction of Cardinal Sin, the pealing of the Church bells signalled a noise barrage to protest Estrada's CONCORD.[348] Meanwhile, Estrada's popularity (net performance) in opinion polls plunged from +60 in September to +28 in October to an all-time low of +5 in December 1999.[349] With mounting opposition against CONCORD and declining popularity of the president, Estrada shelved the project for good, although he still believed that CONCORD was the solution to the economic woes facing the country because by providing incentives to foreign investors (e.g., 100% land ownership), in his view, this would attract more foreign investments and jobs.[350]

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[345] Bagares, 'No to pol reforms, yes to foreign ownership.'
[346] Martin P. Marfil and Nereo C. Lujan, 'Narvasa body open to junking Cha-cha,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 23 August 1999, 1 & 18. *Pulse* Asia Inc., conducting a national survey in the first-half of September 1999 concluded that 42% were against CONCORD, 32% were agreeable provided only in a 'big crisis or emergency' while only 25% were amenable to constitutional change if the citizens wanted it, see Stella O. Gonzales, 'Survey says Erap popularity down,' *Philippine Daily* Inquirer, 14 October 1999, 1.
[347] *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 'We must never forget,' 22 September 1999, 1& 16.
[348] Ibid.
[349] Mahar Mangahas, 'Public Satisfaction with governance in the Philippines, 1986-1999,' *SWS Occasional Paper*, June 2000.
[350] Marichu Villanueva, 'Congress told: convene constituent assembly,' *The Philippine Star*, 21 December 1999, 1 & 4.

In sum, in both anti-Charter change campaigns, the Church factored in these protest movements through its pronouncements (bishops' pastoral letters, either collectively or individually; homilies), its exhortation to the faithful to join the rallies, its mobilisation of church organisations, parishes and BECs, and its persistent criticisms levelled against the Ramos and Estrada administrations. In both anti-Charter change cases, the response of the lay to the promptings of the Church hierarchy revealed a meeting of minds between the leaders and the members (hierarchy-laity interaction) as shown in the number of people that joined the rallies nationwide and the massive public objection registered in surveys. In both cases the pro-democracy civil society groups including the Left, stood side by side with the Church (church-civil society nexus) in the protest movement all over the country. The participation of the laity and civil society validated the church leadership's correct reading of the sentiments of the people. Like the defence against military coup attempts, peace advocacy, electoral involvement, these anti-Charter change mobilisations were experiential lessons constructing the meaning of citizenship. Citizenship was actualised in the vigilance of the people against attempts to erode the democratic gains won following the collapse of the authoritarian regime. Citizenship was tied closely to the survivability and sustainability of democracy.

4.9 The Church and People Power II

The ouster of President Estrada (from January 15 to 20), dubbed as People Power II by some political observers, was a much more complex phenomenon than the People Power I that initiated a regime change in 1986. First, Estrada, unlike Marcos, had a huge electoral mandate (winning nearly 40% of the vote in a ten-way contest with significant support mostly from the poor). He was a populist President that the masa (masses) could identify as their leader. Second, there was a broader elite consensus in People Power I compared with People Power II. Estrada had a strong backing from the elite including former Marcos-linked business magnates Eduardo Cojuangco and Lucio Tan while the business sector was largely against him. The Church, from

its leaders down to its members, was fragmented with regard to the ouster of Estrada. Third, civil society organisations were likewise divided. The anti-Estrada civil society forces were typically middle class while the pro-Estrada groups were mainly coming from the urban poor communities and the organisations that benefited from his administration. And fourth, while the interest articulation and lobbying of groups may be seen as a democratic impulse during the Estrada crisis, this opened debates about the assumptions of direct democracy (e.g., people power) and raised concerns about the limits of democratisation.

Unlike previous post-authoritarian presidents, no honeymoon period was given to the Estrada government at least as far as the media, the business sector and the Church were concerned. Not long after his inauguration in 1998, upon the request of the Marcos family, President Estrada allowed the burial of the Marcos remains at the *Libingan nang mga Bayani* (National Heroes Cemetery).[351] This was tantamount to giving ex-President Marcos a hero's burial. The media, business groups, civil society actors and the Church rallied and pressed the government to change its plan. The tension eased when the Marcos family withdrew their request.[352] Still, Estrada, riding on a huge net performance of at least +60 from September 1998, a couple of months after he assumed the Office of President, maintained his high popularity until he reached the end of his first year as President.[353] Estrada had impressive net satisfaction ratings in his first year of office: +61 net satisfaction in November 1998, +67 in March 1999 and +65 in June 1999.[354]

Estrada's pro-poor rhetoric was never translated into a coherent and comprehensive programme. The presidential Cabinet appointees were a combination of known former NDF key figures like DAR Secretary Horacio Morales, Technical Education and Skills Development

[351] President Marcos died in Honolulu in 1989 and his embalmed body lies in an air-conditioned crypt in his hometown in Northern Luzon
[352] Doronila, *The Fall of Joseph Estrada...*, 33.
[353] Mahar Mangahas, 'From juetenggate to People Power 2: the SWS surveys of public opinion,' Social Weather Stations presentation materials, 16 February 2001, 15.
[354] Mangahas, 'Public Satisfaction with governance in the Philippines..., 15.

(TESDA) Director Edificio de la Torre and former political allies of Marcos led by Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora. This betrayed deep cleavages in political orientation and in government policies. The National Anti-Poverty Commission's (NAPC) thrust to target and alleviate poverty of the one hundred poorest families in every province and city was criticised by NGOs/POs and business groups 'for its tokenism and vulnerability to political favouritism.'[355]

Growing signs of inept leadership, the return of Marcos-era cronies and nepotism, lack of a coherent and comprehensive programme addressing poverty, among others, eroded Estrada's formidable political capital: his popularity.[356] The Office of the President was already tarnished by questionable deals, corruption, and moral and political issues which were reversing democratic gains accumulated during the Aquino and Ramos administrations. Unlike Aquino and Ramos, Estrada was known to have exceptionally few cabinet meetings. Presidential chief of staff Aprodicio Laquian was sacked from office after revealing the President's persistent drinking sessions with his 'midnight cabinet' (friends and political supporters).[357] More talks about corruption in the government and its inability to address the problems of poverty circulated in the media.[358] This weakened people's confidence in him and pressed him to form the 'Economic Coordinating Council.'[359] In late 1999, Karina Constantino-David, the administration's housing chief was the first to resign as a member of the Estrada cabinet after a close associate of the president was appointed as a presidential housing adviser without any accountability.[360] The investors' confidence and peso value relative to the US dollar also

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[355] Mary Racelis, 'New visions and strong action: civil society in the Philippines,' in *Funding virtue: civil society aid and democracy promotion*, eds. Marina Ottaway and Thomas Crothers (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), 180.
[356] Racelis, 'New visions and strong action...,' 180.
[357] Alexander Magno, 'Philippines: trauma of a failed presidency,' *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2001), 256.
[358] These included Presidential Adviser Mark Jimenez's suspicious deals, the reluctance on the part of the government to pursue business tycoon Lucio Tan's $500 million tax evasion case; accusations of former SEC Chairperson Perfecto Yasay Jr. that Estrada was interfering in a case concerning the alleged manipulation of the stock market involving Dante Tan, a close associate of the President; the disclosure of well-respected Good Shepherd nun Christine Tan, the Philippine Charity Sweepstake Office Directress (PCSO), regarding charity funds of $10.5 million being diverted for the use of the Estrada family. See *Today*, 'Key events in President Estrada's impeachment trial,' 20 January 2001, 4; Doronila, *The fall of Joseph Estrada....*
[359] Magno, 'Philippines....'
[360] Doronila, *TheFall of Joseph Estrada...*, 30.

correlated with the declining Estrada popularity.[361] Investors' confidence and peso value likewise fell with Estrada's declining poll ratings.

The National Peace Conference (NPC), meanwhile, held national consultations with different sectors from late 1999 to around mid-2000 as regards the growing crisis besetting the presidency.[362] In June 2000, Akbayan!, a key player civil society organisation, fired its opening salvo calling for the resignation of the President. This was the first clamour for resignation among the political groups.[363] The following month came the exposé of the Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) concerning the discrepancy between Estrada's declared assets and his acquisition and renovation of luxurious mansions in Manila and Baguio for his family and mistresses. As the Church leadership was still 'studying the situation' from August to September, NPC started exploring the possibility of impeaching the president.[364] This group would eventually become a key player in the revival of *Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino* (KOMPIL II, Congress of Filipino Citizens). KOMPIL II, a broad and loose aggregation of more than 100 organisations and 1,000 individuals, was reconvened on October 29, 2001.[365] In KOMPIL II, Former President Aquino was the keynote speaker. Fr. Robert Reyes from the Archdiocese of Manila, was one of the KOMPIL convenors and a crucial liaison between the Archdiocese of Manila and civil society groups.[366] St. Paul Chartres nun Rosanne Mallilin, Executive Secretary of NASSA was also an active participant in KOMPIL. Although no formal linkage was made between the Church and civil society, the presence of Fr. Reyes and Sr. Mallilin provided a vital connection linking the Archdiocese of Manila and the CBCP to

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[361] Amando Doronila, ' Estrada's fate to be decided by falling economy,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer* 04 December 2000, 1 & 20.
[362] John J. Carroll, 'The Church, State and People Power,' *Intersect* 16(2), (February 2001), 8-11.
[363] Anna Marie A. Karaos, 'Not mob rule,' *Intersect* 16(2), (February 2001), 14.
[364] Ibid., 13 & 15.
[365] Claudeth Mocon, 'KOMPIL reconvenes, this time vs. Estrada,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 30 October 2001, 1 & 10. The first KOMPIL, a broad coalition of protest groups from the Left to Moderates, was set up in January 1984 which represented civil society in its opposition against the Marcos regime.
[366] Interview with Fr. Robert Reyes, University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman Parish Priest, Quezon City, 08 February 2001.

KOMPIL II.[367] Much of this linkage was built on informal ties which church and civil society organisations had developed through the years and frequently reactivated particularly on pressing issues like this.[368] KOMPIL II together with BAYAN, the *politicos* in the opposition and the Council of Philippine Affairs (COPA) created the Multi-sectoral Opposition in the Resign-Impeach-Oust (RIO) campaign against Estrada.[369]

On October 2, a damning revelation of Ilocus Sur Governor Luis 'Chavit' Singson, his former close associate, linked President Estrada to anomalous *jueteng*[370] payoffs of $8 million and $2.6 million from tobacco excise tax.[371] In the wake of this grave exposé, Cardinal Sin and the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Manila issued a statement on October 11 declaring:

> In the light of all the scandals that have besmirched the image of the Presidency in the last two years, we stand by our conviction that he has *lost the moral ascendancy to govern.* Without meaning to preempt the results of the investigation about the jueteng issue and corruption case, we believe that in the spirit of delicadeza[372] and for the good of the people, *he must relinquish his office* and turn it over to his constitutional successor.[373]

The Cardinal was clearly passing his judgment on the basis of moral values but which had profound political consequences. The Church's statement, although civil society protagonists had already started organising for the ouster of Estrada, was the first official position coming from a national Organisation. The following day, although somewhat belatedly, Vice-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo resigned as Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and

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[367] Mallilin interview; Interview with Joel Rocamora, Executive Director, Institute of Popular Democracy (IPD), Quezon City, 22 February 2001.
[368] Ibid.
[369] Karaos, 'Not mob rule,' 15.
[370] 'Jueteng' is an illegal numbers game which is widespread in the Philippines. Bets are collected by designated collectors who are given protection by some powerful figures in the locality. The network of bet collection is very systematic starting from the lowest political unit to the national level, and involving an ordinary collector to powerful figures in society (military, high ranking public official, private individual). Gov. Singson was involved in this business until he spilled the beans.
[371] Doronila, *The fall of Joseph Estrada*, 4.
[372] Sense of propriety.
[373] Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, 'On the way of truth,' A Pastoral Statement of the Presbyteral Council pf the Archdiocese of Manila, 11 October 2000, italics mine.

Development (DSWD), a cabinet position. From then on, she became the unifying symbol of the opposition against Estrada. On October 13, the AMRSP called for the resignation of 'the highest officials' of the land implying that Macapagal-Arroyo was also suspect, echoing the position of other groups including Sanlakas.[374] This position, however, was drowned in the more dominant clamour for Estrada's resignation. On October 20, Archbishop Quevedo, CBCP President seconded Cardinal Sin's position.[375] The NCCP and the Council of Ulamas (Islamic leaders) also joined Cardinal Sin's clamour for Estrada's resignation.[376]

The Catholic Church held a huge prayer rally at the EDSA Shrine, Mandaluyong, on November 4, 2000 led by Cardinal Sin and former president Aquino. Sin in his speech called for Estrada's resignation on the basis of the widespread immorality that had plagued the office of the president.[377] He declared: 'Resignation will be good for your (Estrada) soul.'[378] Some 80,000 to 100,000 were mobilised making it the largest anti-Estrada rally during his presidency.[379] Anti-Estrada civil society forces from the Right, Centre and Left of the political spectrum backed the prayer rally. The CBCP, backing Cardinal Sin's call, issued a statement enjoining the faithful to join prayer rallies which would be staged in the dioceses throughout the country.[380] In many provinces and cities including Baguio City, Nueva Vizcaya, Pampanga, Bulacan, Bacolod City, and Iloilo City, similar prayer rallies were organised by the Church.[381]

Nevertheless, the cracks within the Church were visible among and between the bishops and lay organisations. CBCP President Archbishop Quevedo's statement which supported Cardinal Sin's appeal for Estrada's resignation was not a collegial statement binding all the

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[374] 'Resignation for impartial investigation,' Statement of the Association of Major Superiors in the Philippines and its Mission Partners on the recent event in our country, 13 October 2000. Sanlakas is composed of multi-sectoral and multi-organisational groups that broke away from the RAs (reaffirmists of CPP tenets).
[375] Orlando B. Quevedo, 'On the Senate hearing on the Singson exposé,' 20 October 2000.
[376] Magno, 'Philippines...,' 259.
[377] Norman Bordadora, Rocky Nazareno and Juliet Javellana, '"Take a vow now": Estimated 80,00 to 100,000 attend EDSA Shrine prayer rally,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 05 November 2000, 1 &14.
[378] Ibid., 1.
[379] Ibid.
[380] 'CBCP-NASSA Press Release,' n.d.
[381] *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 'Resign calls thunder across nation,' 05 November 2000, 1 & 4.

members, unlike the CBCP statement issued in February 1986. Only about a third of all the Philippine bishops were actively involved in the campaign to oust Estrada.[382] The Archbishop of Cebu, Cardinal Vidal remained sympathetic to Estrada and avoided calling for his resignation to the dismay of parishioners in Cebu.[383] Bishop Teodoro Bacani, a Manila Auxiliary bishop and El Shaddai spiritual director, Bishop Camilo Gregorio, and others supported Estrada. Brother Mike Velarde, leader of El Shaddai, aligned his flock with Estrada although a some El Shaddai members, such as some leaders in London, signed a letter calling for his resignation. By contrast, Couples for Christ, a middle class Catholic charismatic group, became a key player in KOMPIL II.[384] These divisions within the Church affected its internal dynamics (Church *ad intra*) and its interaction with civil society (Church *ad extra*). Although many groups in the Church formed partnership with anti-Estrada civil society organisations, the Church failed to win the support of pro-Estrada organisations and many urban poor communities. NGO community organisers of some urban poor organisations in Manila were seen marching with the anti-Estrada camp while the communities they organised joined the pro-Estrada rallyists.

Lawmakers from both Houses started shifting alliances. House Speaker Manuel Villar, a key Estrada ally, made history when he withdrew his allegiance to Estrada and brought with him 40 members of Congress, surpassing the required number (73) to impeach the President.[385] He subsequently approved and sent the impeachment resolution of the House of Representatives to the Senate. In this way, President Estrada became the first Philippine President to be impeached by the House of Representatives. On December 7, the Senate impeachment trial began amid massive street protests beginning with a Mass presided over by Cardinal Sin and culminating in

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[382] John J. Carroll, 'Civil society, the Churches and the ouster of Erap,' in *Between fires: fifteen perspectives on the Estrada crisis*, ed. Amando Doronila (Pasig City: Anvil Publishing Inc., and Makati City: Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2001), 246.
[383] Ibid.
[384] Songco interview.
[385] Carroll, 'Civil society, the Churches and the ouster of Erap,' 240.

the 'Jericho March' around the Senate.[386] The number of rallyists was disappointing since they only mobilised some 70,000 when they expected a million to get the military to withdraw its loyalty from Estrada.[387] The 'Jericho March' rally was mainly a civil society initiative with the support of the Church. The mobilisation nearly clashed with pro-Estrada support groups, coming mostly from poorer classes which was also a sizable contingent. In the meantime, an economic downturn also put pressure on Estrada.

The Senate trial was televised nationwide making Filipinos more aware of the allegations that Estrada was linked with and yet at least half of the senators maintained their position in favour of Estrada. Conviction of President Estrada required 2/3 of the votes of the Senate members. It was increasingly clear that the Senators loyal to Estrada would acquit him eventually. This suspicion was quite evident in their refusal by a vote of 11-10 on January 16 to open a second envelope, submitted in evidence in the case against the President, containing the Estrada documents detailing $63.5 million he amassed during his presidency.[388] This figure could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be achieved by lawful means given his declared assets of $690,000.[389] The Senate vote, after a long, heated, and passionate deliberation sealed his imminent acquittal but triggered an uproar in the Senate Gallery, the immediate walk-out of the prosecution team, and the indefinite suspension of the trial. That same night, the demonstrators started trooping to the EDSA Shrine, a symbol of People Power I in 1986, upon the call of Cardinal Sin to express their indignation in prayerful vigil. The following day, EDSA was closed to traffic and people started arriving in droves.

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[386] 'Jericho March' echoed a biblical event when the Jews were marching around the walls of Jericho. When the horn was blown, the walls collapsed. The demonstrators were instructed to march around the Senate and at the moment when the horn would be blown, they were to shout so that the members of the Senate will hear their clamour for justice. They were not, however, allowed to march around the Senate as one group but only in groups of 500.

[387] Carroll, 'Civil society, the Churches, and the oust of Erap,' 242. A conservative estimate of the crowd was placed at 25,000.

[388] For more details see Doronila, *The Fall of Joseph Estrada*, 149-167.

[389] Brook Larmer and Mahlon Meyer, 'The Return of people power,' *Newsweek* 29 January 2001, 10.

At EDSA, KOMPIL II organised a 24-hour programme of songs, dances, speeches, and other forms of entertainment as the crowd steadily increased with the coming of people from nearby provinces. The Church, on the other hand, provided spiritual services to enhance the morale of the protest assembly. On January 19, the AFP Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes and Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado resigned and recognised the new administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Philippine National Police (PNP) Director Panfilo Lacson, a staunch Estrada ally, had no choice but to resign when his deputy and regional commanders likewise withdrew their support.[390] Elements of the military secured his office and threatened arrest if he resisted. This accelerated the mass resignation of the entire Estrada cabinet.

On January 20, in the wake of Estrada's refusal to leave the Presidential Palace immediately, civil society groups and key personalities from the Left, Right and Centre decided to proceed to Mendiola to pressure him to leave Malacañang.[391] Cardinal Sin, for fear that lives may be endangered, did not want the EDSA crowd to march to Malacañang, the Presidential Palace. The leaders of anti-Estrada civil society organisations, on the other hand, were bent on proceeding to the Presidential Palace. However, after an agonising discussion, civil society organisations at this point parted ways with the Cardinal and proceeded to the Presidential Palace to press Estrada to resign and leave the official seat of authority. The move was a gamble but proved effective, otherwise Estrada would have been granted a 5-day grace period which could have engendered political uncertainty.[392] President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took her oath of office before Chief Justice Hilario Davide at the EDSA Shrine. In a national survey, 61% accepted Arroyo as the new president while only 22% did not accept her.[393] Meanwhile, by February, Estrada's net trust rating nose-dived to -12 in the entire country, although he still

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[390] Carl H. Landé, 'The Return of "people power" in the Philippines,' *Journal of Democracy* 12(2), (April 2001), 95.
[391] Lisandro Abadia, 'To march or not to march: only in the Philippines,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 02 March 2001, 1 & 7.
[392] Cathy Yamsuan, 'It's 13-0 for Gloria: Supreme Court cites Angara diary as basis for Erap resignation,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 03 March 2001. 16.
[393] ABS-CBN/SWS, 'Survey on people power 2 and the change in the presidency,' 2-7 February 2001, 50.

had significant sympathy from the poor.[394] Estrada, however, refused to admit the legitimacy of the Arroyo administration. On March 2, 2001, the legal question was finally laid to rest by the Supreme Court which voted 13-0 in favour of the legitimacy of the Arroyo administration.[395]

Although the legitimacy of the Arroyo government was recognised swiftly by the international community, some political observers were critical of the mobilisation calling 'People Power II' as 'a defeat for due process', 'a civilised mob rule', and sarcastically as 'rich people power.'[396] Others, however, argued that political establishments in the Philippines are weak and when the people were robbed of their constitutional rights, they were left with no further option but to press the government to correct the wrong done to them.[397] 'People Power' afterall is enshrined in the 1987 charter when it declared that the Philippines is not only a republican, but also a democratic state whose 'Sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them.'[398] As a democratic state, provisions for direct democracy are in place (e.g., 'initiative and referendum' to amend the constitution, voting out incumbent local officials, etc.) to complement the representative form of government.[399] The Supreme Court, arguing on the principle of *salus populi est suprema lex* (the welfare of the people is the supreme law), confirmed the legitimacy of Macapagal-Arroyo's ascension to the Presidency in its 13-0 ruling favouring the legitimacy of the Arroyo presidency.[400] Former Constitutional Commissioner Fr. Joaquin Bernas argued that 'while it (people power) ousted a President, it preserved the existing legal order.'[401]

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[394] Ibid., 28.
[395] Yamsuan, 'It's 13-0 for Gloria....'
[396] Seth Mydans, 'People power 2: not the same glow,' *Today*, 06 February 2001, 1; Anthony Spaeth, 'Oops, we did it again: ousting presidents by revolution has become a bad national habit,' *Time*, 29 January 2001, 22); Landé, 'The Return of "people power" in the Philippines.'
[397] See Mydans, 'People power 2...,' 10; Amando Doronila, ' EDSA II worries Western Media,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 31 January 2001, 1 & 14.
[398] *The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines*, 1; Joaquin G. Bernas, '"People power" in the charter,' *Today*, 14 February 2001, 8.
[399] Ibid.
[400] Yamsuan, 'It's 13-0 for Gloria....'
[401] Bernas, '"People power" in the charter.'

There were reports, culled from an informal conversation between the Ambassador to the Holy See and an officer of the Secretariat of State, that the Vatican did not support the political involvement of the Philippine Church.[402] Nonetheless, the Apostolic Nunciature denied this rift claiming that 'The Holy See...is in absolute harmony and solidarity with the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines.'[403] Vatican support gave legitimacy to the national Church's involvement, an important recognition that what they were doing was in accord with the thrust of the Vatican leadership.

Estrada and his son, former San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, were arrested on April 25. The following day, Estrada's supporters assembled at the EDSA Shrine to protest their arrest. This protest assembly was covered by TV station Net 25 and Radio DZEC (both INC-owned) and supported by a host of pro-Estrada senators and former government officials.[404] Former PNP Director Lacson, on the second day of the protest, told the protesters: 'Victory is nearly ours.'[405] On the eve of May 1, 2001, amid coup rumours, the protesters stormed the Presidential Palace. Although this mobilisation had the support of politicians and business people loyal to Estrada, his sons JV Ejercito and Jude Ejercito, key leaders of Estrada's political base and many INC and some El Shaddai members, it betrayed a profound discontent of the *masa* which the ruling elite have over the years neglected.[406]

Amando Doronila, a well-respected political observer, posed some questions about certain assumptions of 'people power' and underscored its ambivalence in a democratising polity.[407] Democracy (as defined in this study) in Philippine politics is generally vibrant, but evidently it was not intended primarily to address the issues around class relations. The 'People

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[402] 'Press release of the Apostolic Nunciature,' Manila, 19 December 2001.
[403] Ibid.
[404] Doronila, *The fall of Joseph Estrada...*, 220-246
[405] Ibid., 279.
[406] Ibid., 220-246
[407] Amando Doronila, 'Beyond Edsa and people power,' available from http://www.inq7.net/opi/2002/feb/22/text/opi_amdoronila-1-p.htm, 26 November 2002.

Power III' protests dramatised profoundly the betrayal of the cause of the poor. The Church too reflected on this event and realised the deep gulf that existed between them and the poor –a contradiction of the very vision they opted for at PCP II: to be a church of the poor.

4.10 Concluding remarks

Compared with the Church during the authoritarian period, it must be said that the post-authoritarian Church as an actor was well positioned in Philippine society. A relatively high public confidence in the Church gave it some leverage to deal with democratic issues. Although post-authoritarian democracy in the Philippines has been described as 'stable, but low quality,'[408] it is said to have greater democratic impulse than its regional counterparts such as Malaysia and Indonesia.[409] Sustaining democracy was a more complex task than its initiation during the Marcos years. The emergence of church actors that were anti-Catholic (INC and fundamentalist movements) and those that grew out of the Catholic fold (El Shaddai and Opus Dei), inheriting a politicised military, the proliferation of civil society organisations of different political persuasions, the complexity of the political atmosphere (e.g., during Estrada crisis) to name a few, complicated the Church's contributions in democracy building. Using Diamond's definition of democracy (see Chapter One), one could argue that the Philippines in general fulfilled the requirements of a democratic polity. Democratisation in this sense largely focused on asserting civilian supremacy over the military (e.g., anti-military coup campaigns), propping up the electoral system, participation of organised groups (e.g., peace building, promotion of human rights, anti-charter change mobilisations) and pressing for government accountability (Estrada crisis), but the run-up to the ouster of Estrada and the competing protest mobilisations of People Power II and 'People Power III' revealed the fragility and limits of the country's democratic project. Class tension was evident in the two mobilisations, an issue that a pluralist

[408] William Case, *Politics in Southeast Asia: democracy or less* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2002), 201-243.
[409] James Putzel, 'Why has democratization been a weaker impulse in Indonesia and Malaysia than in the Philippines?' In *Democratization,* eds., David Potter *et al.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 240-263.

view of democracy (such as Diamond's definition) does not seek to resolve. Nevertheless, the Church's democratic contributions must neither be simply dismissed nor overstated. On this note, three lessons can be deduced from the narrative of the Philippine Church in the post-authoritarian period.

First, following the argument posed in the previous chapter more than ever the Church demonstrated that indeed it was an actor with its own agenda in democracy building, and not simply acted upon by the conditions of the times. This point connects well with Mainwaring and Wilde's observation regarding many local Churches in Latin America during the transition period when they assumed a position in society 'both as actor and as acted-upon.'[410] In post-Marcos era, the Philippine Church continued its role 'as actor and as acted upon.' As was mentioned in the concluding section of Chapter Three, the Philippine Church in the post-authoritarian setting was not merely protecting its own corporate interests as Gill's 'rational-actor model of behaviour' would want to propose to explain the politics of Churches in Latin America, although admittedly it did on some occasions.[411] The church-led and church-supported initiatives and interventions were foremost in the Church's democratic agenda. These were in keeping with the thrusts of the social teaching of the Church, Vatican II, and PCP II, although these attempts to reform the Church did not settle competing interpretations regarding its public role in Philippine society or the ecclesiological divides among church groups. But for pro-democracy groups within the Church, their interventions found a theological base and energy from these ecclesiological thrusts, thus curtailing the reactionary tendencies of many of the Church's agencies. Evidently the Church did not rest content in the inauguration of democracy as in the defeat of the Marcos military dictatorship. It had to ensure that democracy would survive and work. Its support for the 1987 Constitution was a commitment to democracy and the primacy of law over patronage and clientelism. Notwithstanding the weaknesses of the

[410] Mainwaring and Wilde, 'Progressive Church in Latin America...,' 1.
[411] Gill *Rendering unto Caesar...*; Gill, 'The Economics of evangelization.'

Charter, it contained strong democratic features: encouragement and recognition of NGO/PO roles, safeguards against authoritarianism, provisions on human rights and social justice. The Church's endorsement and lobby for the ratification of the Charter, the defence it put up for the constitutional government when it was threatened by a string of military coup attempts, its resistance against self-serving attempts to amend the Charter, all these reveal the Church's unwavering stance to defend the fledgeling democracy. Its human rights advocacy and peace efforts together with peace advocates and civil society organisations, particularly during the period of Aquino and partially during that of Ramos, sought a concept of peace not merely in terms of cessation of hostilities but dealing squarely with issues breeding the armed conflict. The Church played a key role in ensuring that the first ceasefire between the military and communist rebels would be observed despite some violations. Although the peace efforts were partially successful, the formation of a peace constituency arose from peace consultations, education and mobilisations. This peace constituency was the single most important outcome of these peace processes. Electoral outcomes did not, however, indicate that the peace constituency was able to translate its influence into actual votes for candidates with a clear peace agenda. Nonetheless, the Church's involvement in electoral reform through PPCRV and VOTE-CARE factored in curbing anomalies in the electoral exercises in the 1990s, especially in the 1992 and 1998 elections. Purging the electoral list, voters' education, presence in polling places, poll watching, monitoring vote canvassing, and assistance to NAMFREL's OQC were the main contributions of the church-based electoral watch movements. Voters' political education, however, remained seasonal, practically only during election periods. The perception that individual church leaders were campaigning for certain political candidates diminished its credibility as a non-partisan Organisation, although CBCP remained neutral during the elections. Finally, its active involvement in the resign-impeach-ouster of President

Estrada attempted to push the process of democratisation to include good governance and public transparency.

Second, the strength of the Church's interventions and impulses hinged largely on hierarchy-laity interaction (church *ad intra*) and church-civil society linkage (*church ad extra*) in their explicit or implicit form. The variety of doctrinal orientations (e.g, on property rights, extent of the Church's public involvement) and pastoral strategies of actors within the hierarchy (e.g., CBCP, AMRSP) and the laity (e.g., charismatic movements, BECs, Opus Dei) was often shaped by disparate class and power relations. Thus building a broad consensus of church position as in church ad intra meant constant negotiation and deliberation within and between the hierarchy and laity. Clearly Vatican II and PCP II did not solve completely opposing differences and tendencies within and between parties. Church *ad intra* was a complex process. A trying moment for the Church *ad intra* dynamics was the relationship between the hierarchy and El Shaddai. Despite the designation of Bishop Bacani and priests in the movement as spiritual directors, this did not prevent El Shaddai from taking political options (e.g., tacit support for Ramos' cha-cha, and Estrada's Presidency) directly opposing the view of the Church hierarchy. Nonetheless, a positive church ad intra provided a climate of participation within the Church by ensuring that the laity (organisations and individuals) had a voice in church proceedings and decisions. In turn this internal interaction shored up another level of linkage involving civil society actors.

Church-civil society partnership, whether cast in formal or informal ties, had its origins as far back as in the 1930s when the popularisation of the Catholic social teaching started. This was buttressed further by Vatican II and PCP II (see Chapter Three). Evidently, Church-civil society nexus was neither sufficient to construct democracy nor was the 'network of ties' largely located in civil associations as Putnam would claim.[412] Rather, this church-civil society linkage

[412] Putnam, 'Bowling alone....'

had definite political meaning and orientation carried out by both actors.[413] By supporting the ratification of the 1987 Charter and defending a fragile democracy against coup plotters, the Church aligned with the laity (people) and with civil society organisations in their continuing struggle to deepen democratisation. Arguably the Church's linkages (hierarchy-laity interaction and church-civil society partnership) widened the sites of participation of actors within the Church and without. These linkages enhanced its capacity and role as an actor in democratisation particularly in peace issues, anti-Charter change campaigns, electoral watch projects, and public accountability leading to the ouster of President Estrada. In their advocacy for peace, the Church worked with peace activists and civil society groups in engaging the government and the rebels for a lasting peace settlement. The fact that the Church was part of, not above, the peace constituency plainly shows that it was deeply inserted in the struggle of its people to achieve meaningful and lasting peace. The two anti-Charter change campaigns demonstrated tight partnership with civil society organisations (Church *ad extra*) in defending the constitution against self-serving motivations to undermine its democratic character. The participation of people in these protest assemblies nationwide simply indicated that the Church's reading of the situation reflected the concerns of the people (hierarchy-laity interaction). Church-based electoral organisations (PPCRV and VOTE-CARE), whether formally or informally, struck partnership with civil society groups (e.g., NAMFREL and IBP), despite some tensions between and among themselves. PPCRV and VOTE-CARE being initiated and led by lay people and supported by the hierarchy are fine exemplars of hierarchy-laity interaction. The exercise of citizenship appears in all these to be a most important binding force connecting the Church's leaders with the faithful (laity) and with civil society organisations. The leaders of civil society organisations realise the importance of church network

[413] See Putzel, 'Accounting for the "dark side" of social capital....'

(organisations, BECs, parishes, and institutes), but at the same time the Church sees that without civil society groups broad coalitions and alliances, much of its involvement is quite limited.

Nevertheless, there had been divisive issues that challenged the church-civil society nexus, particularly on population, divorce, women and gender issues where public opinion showed opposing views from the position taken by the Church. The decision of the leaders of civil society actors to march to Mendiola to press ousted President Estrada to resign and vacate the Presidential Palace against the view of Cardinal Sin, betrayed the independence of the former when all throughout the campaign the two were often been moving in close partnership.

Likewise, there had been occasions of weak church *ad intra* and *ad extra*: ambivalent positions with regard to the vigilante movement, counter-insurgency campaign of the government, and the US military bases. All these diminished the Church's appeal as peacemaker. In these areas of church ambivalence, invariably there was hardly any significant consultation with the laity (lack of hierarchy-laity interaction) and interaction with civil society groups (lack of church-civil society nexus). This seems to suggest that both these linkages (hierarchy-laity interaction and church-civil society partnership) are intimately connected with each other. The Church's roles in democracy building would not have made much impact where either one of the two is lacking. The Church exerts more influence by speaking from within the laity and civil society groups rather than making pronouncements at them. This shift is pivotal if the Church commits itself to democracy building where it is no longer the 'voice of the voiceless' but simply just one voice in a plurality of voices.

The pluralistic view of democratisation as defined at the beginning of this chapter evidently has limits in the Philippine context (e.g., 'People Power II' and 'People Power III'). Although mass mobilisations have become vehicles of interest articulation and representation, in the case of the Estrada crisis, fragile democratic institutions were sidelined and the class divide manifested itself dramatically in the conflict. It appears then that democratisation in the

Philippines has not sufficiently addressed acute social inequality. A vibrant civil society movement does not necessarily guarantee the closing of a class divide in a democratising polity.

Third, the Church's roles in democracy building have invariably focused on engaged citizenship. The Church's commitment to human rights has gone beyond the conventional definition (e.g., state abuses) to include a wide range of issues (e.g., peace, death penalty, right to development, migrant workers, etc.). Citizenship is neither simply understood as a set of obligations of individuals to the State nor legal entitlements of individuals alone, but also necessitates free and responsible fulfilment of obligations of citizens to the State and society.[414] Citizenship is not only a status, but inevitably includes active engagement.[415] The mainstreaming of 'people power' in the 1987 Charter (e.g., role of NGOs and POs) and the Church's roles in the civil society enabled citizens to become agents involved in the democratic enterprise. Evidently the Church was instrumental in fashioning a quality of engaged citizenship through its campaign for the ratification of the democratic Charter, its mobilisation of the people to defend a fragile democracy besieged by military coup attempts, its contributions to the formation of a peace constituency, its support for political education (e.g., candidates' forum) during and in between election periods, its commitment to electoral reform, its mobilisation for people's participation in the anti-Charter change campaigns, and its role during the Estrada crisis –these enabled people to deepen their understanding and practice of citizenship. Citizenship in this regard can erode the prevalent practice of bossism, clientelism and patronage relationships which typify Philippine politics.[416]

[414] Diokno, 'Becoming a Filipino citizen....'
[415] Jones and Gaventa, 'Concepts of citizenship...,' 5.
[416] Sidel, *Capital, coercion and crime....*

Chapter Five

The Diocese of Malaybalay and post-authoritarian democracy building: an activist Church or civil society animator?

> '...we do not make distinctions in the people's exercise of co-responsibility, dialogue and participation as a people of God and as citizens of the Philippine republic. The practice of their Christianity cannot be separated from the exercise of their citizenship.' Bp. Francisco F. Claver SJ [1]

Chapters three and four set in motion the Catholic Church's narrative as a democratic actor in Philippine society. The next two chapters provide local cases of the Church's roles in strengthening post-authoritarian democracy. These local experiences are intimately connected with the national Church and the macro political context of the times. In this chapter, three main arguments are set out. First, hierarchy-laity interaction (church *ad intra*) in the Diocese of Malaybalay broadened the participatory space within the Church and increased the local Church's resolve in dealing with democratic issues. Second, positive interaction between the Church and civil society (church *ad extra*) enhanced the former's capacity to engage the State and society in enhancing democracy. Third, the local Church was deeply engaged in environmental protection, the promotion of human rights including rights of indigenous peoples and national political issues. Involvement in these issues brought about a new awareness and practice of citizenship favourable to enhancing democracy. To strengthen these arguments, this chapter will firstly present the general background of the Diocese of Malaybalay. Secondly, it will explain the factors that shaped the Church's political involvement during the authoritarian period. Thirdly, it will briefly describe the transition of leadership in the local Church. Fourthly it will narrate and analyse the main lines of political engagements of the Church in the post-authoritarian period. Finally, it will conclude the presentation and discussion.

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[1] Francisco F. Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' in *Quinquennial Report: Prelature of Malaybalay*, Prelature of Malaybalay: Malaybalay, 28 December 1975, 29.

5.1 General background of the Diocese of Malaybalay

The Diocese of Malaybalay comprises the whole province of Bukidnon, excepting Malitbog and including the municipality of Wao, Lanao del Sur, southwest of Bukidnon and Buda (Bukidnon-Davao boundary) in Davao (see Figure 4 next page). It occupies the north central area of Mindanao. Bukidnon is a landlocked area of 829,378 hectares of fertile agricultural land characterised by rugged mountains, extensive plateaus of varying heights, marked by deep and wide canyons, and rolling landscape.[2] Evidently, the early signs of Christianisation show that evangelisation, initiated by the Spanish Recoleto friars and later pursued by the Spanish Jesuits, started as far back as in the middle of the 19th century.[3] The Post-World War II period saw a more sustained, systematic and intensive evangelisation in Bukidnon led by the American Jesuits. By 1975, baptised Catholics were 86% of the whole populace of around 528,000.[4] Bukidnon, like all of Mindanao, used to be under the ecclesiastical territory of the Diocese of Cebu until 1865, under the Diocese of Jaro until 1910, under the Diocese of Zamboanga until 1933, and under the Diocese of Cagayan de Misamis (presently Cagayan de Oro) until April 25, 1969 when the Holy See declared the creation of the Prelature of Malaybalay.[5] The first bishop, Francisco F. Claver SJ, was installed on September 4, 1969 as the Prelate Ordinary of Malaybalay. By then, the influence of Vatican II (1962-1965) was already beginning to make inroads in the Church's identity and mission in the modern world. Like many local Churches in the Philippines and all over the world, the late 1960s and early 1970s marked a profound change in the prelature's pastoral strategies and priorities. During the watch of Bishop Claver (1969 to 1984), the Prelature of Malaybalay (later to be elevated in 1982 to the status of a diocese)

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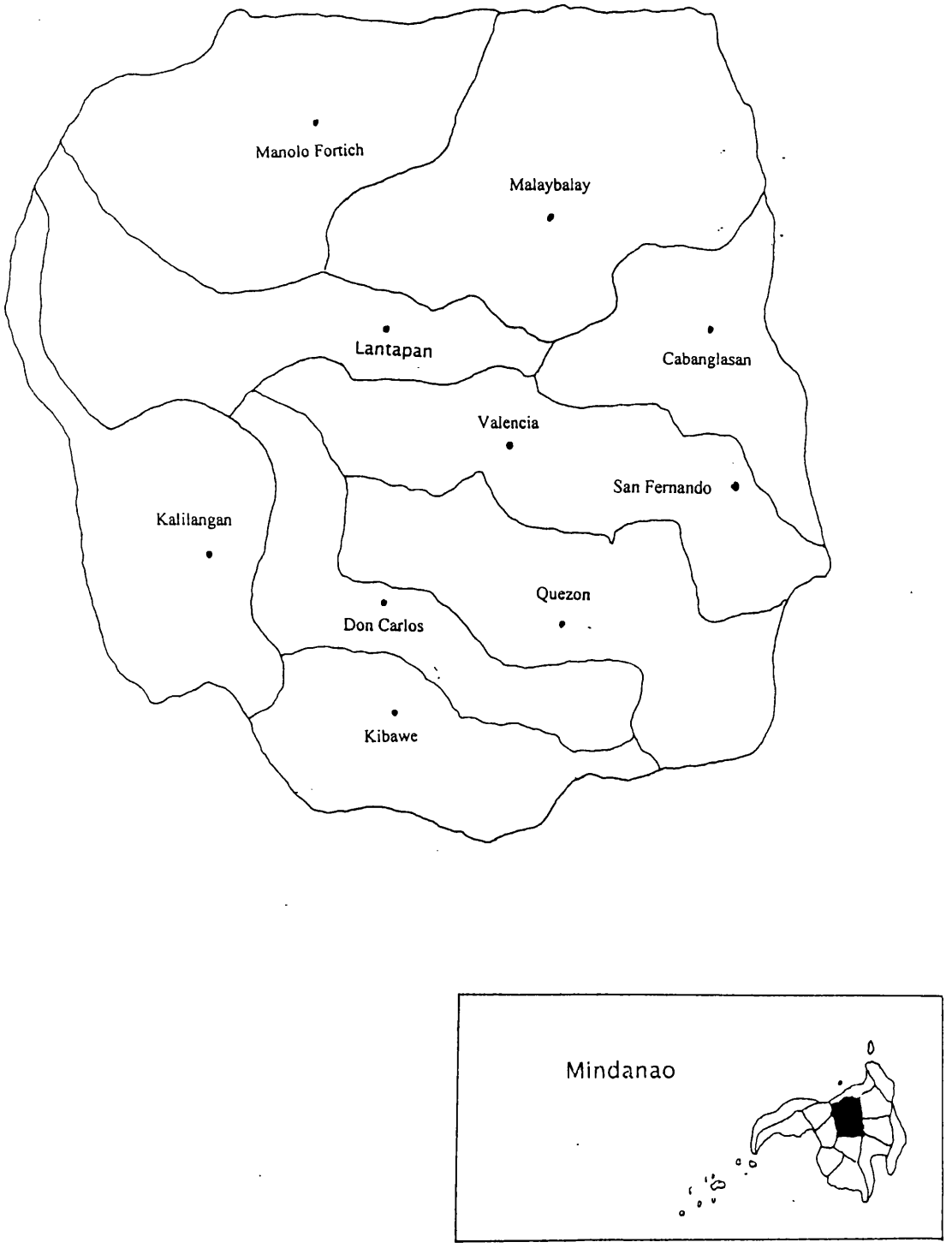
[2] Province Planning and Development Office – Bukidnon (PPDO-B), 'Socio-economic profile 2000,' Malaybalay, 2000, 8.
[3] Miguel A. Bernad, 'The Malaybalay Diocese,' in *Diocese of Malaybalay, 25th Anniversary Silver Jubilee '94*, Malaybalay, Diocese of Malaybalay, n.d, 1. See also Miguel A. Bernad, 'The Jesuit exploration of Pulangi or Rio Grande de Mindanao 1888-1890,' *Kinaadman* VI (1984), 149-190.
[4] Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' 1975, 1.
[5] Bernad, 'The Diocese of Malaybalay,' 1-2.

Figure 4: Ecclesiastical map of the Diocese of Malaybalay



Source: *2000 Directory of the Philippines* (Quezon City: CBCP and Claretian Publications, 2000), 139-142. Map drawn by Jerry P. Masayon, August 2001.

became one of the most politically progressive local Churches in the Philippines. It was one of the first of the local Churches to respond to local challenges which inevitably were linked to national and international issues at a time when most local Churches in the Philippines were still clarifying their stance regarding the NSS ideology of President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

5.2 The factors shaping the local Church's roles under the authoritarian regime

The scope of this study makes it difficult to deal extensively with the Bukidnon Church during the time of Marcos. Nonetheless, it is important to identify the significant factors that influenced the direction of the local Church's involvement during the years of dictatorship and beyond. In this regard, five significant factors are well worth citing: the Vatican II renewal, the authoritarian context, lay participation and the rise of small Christian communities, a young local Church, and the courageous leadership of Bp. Claver.

The first important factor in the progressive radicalisation of the Church in Bukidnon, like many local Churches all around the globe, was the universal renewal in Vatican II (see Chapter Two). The Church documents issuing from Vatican II, Synod of Bishops (1971), Papal Social Encyclicals from *Rerum Novarum* (1891) to *Centisimus Annus* (1991), de-privatised Christian moral imperatives and underpinned ecclesial engagement in public affairs particularly those that involved human dignity, social justice and total human development. In themselves, these do not constitute democratisation, but they enabled the people to become more aware of their human rights and participate in pushing for political democracy. As was explained in chapters one and two, the *aggiornamento*, that is, the updating of the identity and mission of the Church in contemporary times, set out by Vatican II, provided a theological framework that fuelled the trajectory of the religio-political role of the local Church in Bukidnon.

The Vatican II renewal interacted with the brewing socio-political, cultural, and economic conditions of the province and the country. This second factor, in good measure,

helped to redefine the pastoral thrust of the Bukidnon Church. The declaration of martial law in 1972 signalled the suppression of civil liberties and brought about extensive militarisation in the Philippines including Bukidnon. Militarisation and insurgency seemed to correlate positively in Bukidnon, that is, more militarisation meant more insurgency. The prelature's radio station DXBB and the weekly mimeographed newsletter *Ang Bandilyo* (The Towncrier) were both suppressed in November 1976 and January 1977 respectively. DXBB, started in 1971, reached 80% of radio listeners in Bukidnon while *Ang Bandilyo*, which began in 1972, circulated some 3,600 copies to all parishes in the diocese including the government offices.[6] The local Church was consequently charged with subversion and rebellion. Both cases were eventually dismissed for lack of solid evidence. The height of church persecution was the killing of Fr. Godofredo Alingal SJ on April 13, 1981 by hired gunmen linked to a local goverment official in Kibawe, south of Bukidnon.

Jesuit missionary Vincent Cullen reports that the *lumad* (indigenous peoples) became increasingly marginalised and displaced due to land expansion and at times land grabbing activities and harassment by propertied families and huge agri-business (usually multinational companies like Del Monte, Nestlé, San Miguel Corporation, etc.) and commercial firms operating in Bukidnon --mostly with the blessing of the national leadership.[7] Cullen's estimation in 1975 shows that the *lumad* comprised one-fifth of the population in the province with the Bukidnons ('people of the mountains' or Higa-onons) in the north numbering around 528,000 and the Manobos in the south about 30,000.[8] The *lumad* were and still are the most vulnerable

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[6] Joseph I. Stoffel, and Agustin L. Nazareno, 'Communications media center et al.,' in *Quinquennial Report: Prelature of Malaybalay*, Malaybalay: Prelature of Malaybalay, 1975, Appendix B, 35-38; Interview with Revicca I. Aquino, News and Public Affairs Officer, Malaybalay, 21 May 2001.
[7] Vincent Cullen, 'Report on the situation of the cultural minorities in the Province of Bukidnon,' in *Quinquennial Report: Prelature of Malaybalay*, Malabalay: Prelature of Malaybalay, 1975, Appendix E, 49-55.
[8] Ibid., 49; Francis C. Madigan, 'Mindanao inland province,' Book I, Cagayan de Oro: Xavier University, RIMCU, 1969, 43.

group of people in the province owing to their displacement from their ancestral domains, abject poverty, lack of education, being susceptible to cultural prejudice and many other forms of harassment. Compounding the political climate was the issue of underdevelopment in the region. Widespread poverty affecting at least 70% of the people made the poor vulnerable to disease, and malnutrition.[9] The local Church in Bukidnon was confronted with all these harsh realities. It took a bold stance by denouncing political repression, social injustice, and announcing its words of hope and comfort. Given the gravity of the socio-political, cultural and economic issues, the Church became aggressively involved in challenging the excesses of state power. Bp. Claver stood firm in his resolve to promote social transformation while not succumbing to the armed rebellion of the underground Left.[10] Nonetheless, a few members of the clergy, religious and lay leaders actively collaborated with the CPP-NDF-NPA.[11] This created some internal tensions within the local Church which persisted in the 1990s. There were attempts to influence and dominate *Ang Bandilyo*, DXBB, BECs and recruit membership from church people, but this eventually ceased.[12]

A third factor in the radicalisation of the Church in Bukidnon was the emergence of lay participation (see below) and BCCs. Claver clearly drawing from the Vatican II documents, equated the new formulation of ecclesiology with the Church as 'people of God.'[13] This is a critical departure from the prevailing notion that the Church is mainly the hierarchy (bishops, priests and religious). The post-Vatican II ecclesiology is understood to comprise both the lay people (organised and individuals) and hierarchical leadership, and their mutual interaction. Such interaction is crucial in building consensus as within the hierarchy and the laity are differences,

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[9] Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' 1975, 2.
[10] Interview with Fr. Calvin H. Poulin, Former Vicar General, Prelature of Malaybalay, Cagayan de Oro, 09 June 2001.
[11] Interview with Norberto Amora, Lay leader of the Diocese of Malaybalay, Malaybalay, 18 August 2001.
[12] Ibid.; Interview with Loquias Rebecca, Former Diocesan Chancellor, Malaybalay, 05 May 2001.
[13] Claver, 'Quinquennial Report...,' 1975, 28.

varying pastoral inclinations and organisational interests that at times compete with each other. Although changes within the Bukidnon Church were not uniform, by and large, a significant part of its leadership and organised groups (e.g., BCCs/BECs) were vibrant, dynamic, discerning, and responsive to the issues of the times.

Lay participation was evident in the training and commissioning of the *Barrio Apostles*, later to be renamed as *Alagad* (community lay leaders). Taking its cue from the Rural Congress, held in the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro in 1967, the Prelature of Malaybalay sought to de-centralise church presence and activity by going to the *barrio* (village).[14] The barrio was typically a peripheral political area which was often neglected or cut off from ecclesiastical reach coming from the *sentro* (centre), or *poblacion* (town centre). Hence the name given to lay leaders was *Barrio Apostles* . This move was a significant departure from 'town-centred catholicism' which was a dominant ecclesiological scheme before Vatican II.[15] The *alagad* were, and still are, liturgical presiders in the weekly *katilingbanong pag-ampo* (community worship). The *alagad* were typically male, married, between 25 and 40 years old and a resident of the community they served.[16] They were sent to their own communities to preside over Sunday community worship (when no priest is available), conduct biblical studies, and facilitate social analysis to clarify and respond to community issues. It is said that by 1981, there were more than 600 active *alagad*, not to mention over a thousand women and men (catechists, community organisers, and other church workers) who many a time assumed their functions.[17] The *alagad* also served as 'agents of contact' between the local community and the different prelature offices.[18] In effect, the formation of small Christian communities in the 1970s, under

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[14] BEC Commission, 'Formation guide: basic ecclesial community (BEC),' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, BEC Commisssion, 2nd edtion, 1996, 3-4.
[15] Ibid., 4.
[16] Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' 1975, 44.
[17] Francisco F. Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' in *Quinquennial Report: Prelature of Malaybalay*, Malaybalay: Prelature of Malaybalay, 30 December 1981, 20.
[18] Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' 1975, 44.

the leadership and guidance of *alagad*, became the starting point of *Gagmay'ng Kristohanong Katilingban* (GKK, Basic [Small] Christian Communities or BCC) or more commonly known as *Kristohanong Katilingban* (Christian community).

The *alagad* were instrumental in the formation of GKKs which later became known as GSKs (*Gagmay'ng Simbahanong Katilingban* or Basic Ecclesial Communities or BECs). GKKs were mainly *kapilya*-(chapel) based or neighbourhood organisations in the 1970s and 1980s. The shift from GKK (BCC) to GSK (BEC) was made in 1983 through the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference V (MSPC) in an effort to make it plain that these small communities are ecclesial entities and not aligned with or extensions of any ideological groups. BECs have evolved in different forms and sizes, but in general they are essentially lay-led, community-based, bible-centred praying groups, and responsive to local and national issues. BECs are liturgical (stressing worship and prayer), developmental (largely concerned with socio-economic livelihood projects), and liberational (emphasising social and political change).[19] These categories do overlap, but in general, while many of the Bukidnon BECs can be said to be liturgical, the liberational BCCs had immense influence in the post-authoritarian period.[20] The role of facilitators is extremely crucial to ensure that ideas are evoked from the members and not imposed; that a community plan of action is consensually arrived at and not manipulated; that members actively participate and not remain passive. BEC concerns could be put forward through parochial zones, that is, clusters of nearby chapels within a section of a parish. In some cases, issues were brought to parish-wide discussion and action. If there was still no resolution, then it was brought to the level of the prelature or diocese. Thus BECs became zones of interest

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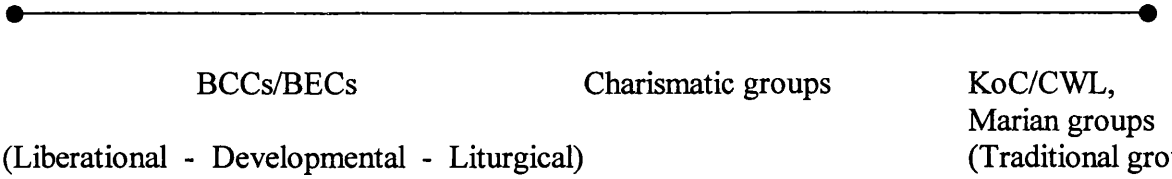
[19] Interview with Fr. Mariano Chia, Parish Priest of Archangel St. Michael, Linabo, Diocese of Malaybalay, 16 May 2001; Interview with Fr. Venancio Balansag, Jr., BEC Desk Coordinator, Malaybalay City, Diocese of Malaybalay, 02 May 2001.

[20] Ibid. Chia, however, claims that during his term (1989-1993) as BEC Coordinator, 50% of the parishes employ the liberational approach of BEC (Chia interview, 16 May 2001). This, however, does not mean that all BECs within the parish are liberational.

articulation and representation. In this sense, BECs paved the way for a participatory and democratised Church.[21] The growth of BECs in many ways institutionalised and mainstreamed lay participation in the life of the local Church in Bukidnon.

The laity in Bukidnon are varied. Many lay individuals do not belong to any of the church groups and others are occasionally practising Christians. But the groups that exercise some influence in the local Church can be classified accordingly. To illustrate this variety, a simplified ecclesiological spectrum of organised groups may help at this point. [22]

Figure 5: Ecclesiological spectrum of Church groups in the Diocese of Malaybalay



The conservative groups (e.g., Knights of Columbus (KoC) and Catholic Women's League (CWL), Marian organisations) are known for their traditional and devotional practices, and adherence to some church teachings in the pre-Vatican II days (e.g., primacy of personal sanctification and eternal life, withdrawal from the world, church constitution as essentially the hierarchy). Overall, they would much rather see the Church leaders focus on 'spiritual' aspects of Christian faith rather than being actively involved in temporal affairs (e.g., social justice, political issues). A good number of traditional local elite politicians are associated with the conservative groups. They were staunchly anti-communist and critical of the Church's involvement in politics. The charismatic groups evolved in the 1970s. Collectively as a group,

[21] Interview with Bp. Francisco F. Claver, Former Bishop of the Diocese of Malaybalay and former Exeuctive Director of NASSA, Quezon City, 13 January 2001.
[22] Based on BEC Commission, 'Formation Guide....'

they don't share the traditional practices of the conservative groups. Nevertheless, their tendency to shy away from political involvement and social justice issues appear to make them depoliticised, although some charismatic groups were politically involved in some post-authoritarian political mobilisation. Rather than accentuate devotional practices, charismatic movements stress the importance of bible study, healing ministry and personal conversion. BECs range from liturgical, developmental to liberational, but on the whole, one would see them as participatory, more oriented to the study of the bible, sharing of lived experience, and involvement in issues affecting their communities. The members of the clergy are generally supportive of BCCs (liturgical, developmental and liberational) while some give importance to the traditional and charismatic groups.

Closely connected to lay participation is the fact that Bukidnon was a particularly young Church during the authoritarian period and arguably still is at present. This then is the fourth factor which made the Church more flexible and attuned to local needs and issues. The sharp increase of migration to Bukidnon is noticeable from 1948. These migrants (*dumagats*, i.e., coming from coastlands) came from 'Misamis Oriental, Bohol, and Cebu' while others from Iloilo, Negros Island and Luzon took advantage of President Ramon Magsaysay's resettlement programmes in the 1950s.[23] Others were pre-war migrants from the province who returned gradually to Bukidnon to reclaim their homesteads after the American bases folded up. The in-migration continued until the 1960s.[24] From a population of 63,400 in 1948, it soared to 414,700 in 1970.[25] This constitutes a 654% increase in population growth, caused largely by the massive in-migration during that period. Intensive evangelisation by American Jesuits and massive in-

[23] Madigan, 'Mindanao inland province,' 40; Interview with Bp. Honesto Ch. Pacana, SJ, Bishop of the Diocese of Malaybalay, Malaybalay, 24 May 2001.
[24] Madigan, 'Mindanao inland province,' 40.
[25] Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' 1975, 1.

migration in the province happened almost simultaneously after World War II.[26] The presence of a sizable number of migrants in the province meant that people were adaptable in cultural practices, including their religiosity and their understanding of being part of a faith community. Unfortunately, the influx of migrants carried with it a downside effect: the displacement and exploitation of the *lumad* in Bukidnon.

As a young Church, Bukidnon was considered a mission area of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro, prior to 1969. Its local clergy only started to emerge in the late 1960s. Local diocesan priests typically come from the province of Bukidnon while the religious priests in general were mostly foreigners or non-Bukidnon Filipinos.[27] The table below suggests the gradual emergence of a local (diocesan) clergy in Bukidnon.

Table 1: Number of Clergy in the Diocese of Malaybalay[28]

Year	Diocesan	Religious	Total
1975	7	33	40
1981	20	26	46
1989	32	29	61
2000	50	18	68

Note: The Religious are mostly Jesuits, a few Scarboros and Benedictines (contemplatives).

From 1975 to 2000, the diocesan clergy posted a gain of 43 priests while the religious (Jesuits, Scarboros and Benedictines) diminished by 15. Claver notes that in 1975, religious priests to diocesan clergy was approximately 5 to 1.[29] In 2000, twenty five years after, this ratio is almost reversed. This steady upsurge of diocesan clergy was a crucial development in terms of the localisation of the Church. Despite this increase of diocesan clergy, in 1995, 'Catholics per

[26] Madigan, 'Mindanao inland province,' 40.
[27] Diocesan priests are directly under the resident bishop and they generally remain in their diocese. The members of the religious congregations (or simply known as religious), although they work with and for the bishop in his diocese, by virtue of their religious vows, can be moved out of the diocese and sent elsewhere by their Superiors.
[28] Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' 1981, 3; CBCP, *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines* (Manila: Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and Catholic Trade Inc.), 393-397; *2000 Catholic Directory of the Philippines* (Quezon: CBCP and Claretian Publications), 139-142.
[29] Claver, 'Quinquennial Report...,' 1981, 20.

priest' ratio was 16,405:1, one of the highest among the local Churches in the Philippines.[30] Indeed lay participation was a pressing need in the diocese.

Being a new local Church, Bp. Claver invited a host of clergy members and nuns from other congregations and dioceses.[31] The influx of religious sisters made possible the formation of the Religious Sisters of Bukidnon (RSB) composed of about 15 congregations.[32] In particular, a few of the Religious of the Good Shepherd Sisters (RGS) were steeped in BCC organising and quite involved in human rights advocacy through TFD.[33]

In the 1970s, NGOs were gradually emerging in the Bukidnon. Apart from TFD, the Community Organisation of the Philippine Enterprise (COPE), church-linked NGOs like the Tribal Filipino Apostolate (TFA) and the Share and Care Apostolates for Poor Settlers (SCAPS) were some of the NGOs that operated in the province. These NGOs linked up with the Social Action Center (SAC)and the Legal Aid Bureau of the Church in many of their activities and programmes.[34] No single NGO in the province had influence without linking up with the Church at that time when civil society groups were still growing in Bukidnon.

As a young Church, the Catholics were open to new ways of faith practices and Christian living that were responsive to the needs of the locality. Its creation as a prelature in 1969 further bolstered its own identity as a distinct Church entity with a life of its own and not just an adjunct or mission area of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro. From 1969 onward, the prelature charted its own course of Church involvement in ways that became truly responsive to Bukidnon, first and foremost, and then to the situation in Mindanao and the whole of the Philippines.

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[30] CBCP Research Office, *1985 to 1995 Statistical profile of the Catholic Church in the Philippines*, 5.
[31] Locquias interview, 05 May 2001.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Personal communication with Dominiano Esta, Assistant Bukidnon Institute of Catechetics, Diocese of Malaybalay, 21 August 2001.
[34] Interview with Atty. Rube S. Gamolo Legal Aid Bureau lawyer, Malaybalay, 11 May 2001.

Finally, the fifth factor in the radicalisation of the Bukidnon Church consists of the courageous leadership of the prelature by Bishop Francisco F. Claver SJ. He was born in Bontoc, Mountain Province on January 20, 1929, joined the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) on May 30, 1948, was ordained as a priest on June 18, 1961 and finally as bishop on August 22, 1969 after Vatican II.[35] He finished his doctoral studies in anthropology at the University of Colorado in 1969 while assuming the leadership of the Prelature of Malaybalay.[36] His background, being a native from Bontoc, a Jesuit, and an anthropologist, probably played a crucial influence in the leadership and vision which he shared with the Church of Bukidnon.[37] He was one of the very few church leaders in the early 1970s who dared to challenge the military abuses and the authoritarian state of President Marcos. A staunch critic of the Marcos government, he was denied a couple of speaking engagements abroad in 1977 by the same government. Very dear to him was his insistence on active lay participation in the life of the Church based on three principles: involvement, dialogue, and co-responsibility.[38] Mechanisms of consultation were set in place so that participation and constant intercommunication were mainstreamed in the life of the Church. Among these mechanisms that Claver instituted which have persisted to this day are: quarterly meeting of priests, *Alagad* general meetings, Sisters' Conference, priests-sisters (religious) meeting every year, deanery (aggregation of nearby parishes) meeting, annual Prelature (Diocesan) General Assembly which included the lay people, parish councils, and the *katilingbanong pag-ampo* (community worship) which became a springboard for the emergence of BEC.[39] These meetings had a way of institutionalising modes of interaction and consultation which to date remain operative in the diocese. It is said that Claver, in running meetings, insisted

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[35] *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*, 393; Philippine Province, *Catalogus Provinciae Philippiniae Societatis Iesu 2002*, 06 October 2001, 103.
[36] Poulin interview, 09 June 2001.
[37] Mary T. Fitzpatrick, *Bishop Francisco F. Claver, SJ, 1972-1990: on the local Church* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, Inc.), 6-11.
[38] Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' 1975, 28-29.
[39] Claver, 'Pastoral administrative and organization of the prelature,' 1981, 5-7.

that the procedure not simply limit itself to a consultative, but develop a deliberative manner of decision-making.[40] Lay people were expected to deliberate and forge a unified consensus in decision-making, if possible, and he wanted people to be responsible for decisions they made.[41] Claver ensured a relatively shallow hierarchical structure in church governance by minimising unnecessary layers of authorities or ecclesiastical titles (e.g., Monsignor). By ensuring a participatory Church, Claver shored up church *ad intra* internal mechanisms favourable to lay empowerment and involvement.

In addition, the growth of the local diocesan clergy was also attributed to Claver's leadership. Among other things, the establishment of a local seminary was a major priority in Claver's early administration of the prelature.[42] When Claver resigned on September 14, 1984 as bishop of Malaybalay, most of the parishes started by the Jesuits had already been taken over by local diocesan clergy. In addition, he strongly proposed that a diocesan bishop should succeed him. This he got in the person of Bp. Gaudencio B. Rosales. All this was foremost in the mind of Claver: that the diocesan clergy and lay participation would be central in the localisation of the Church in Bukidnon.[43] This was another way of empowering the locals to chart the course of their Church in Bukidnon. Claver's legacy lives on in the diocese today. The succeeding bishops of the diocese, Bp. Gaudencio B. Rosales in 1984 and Bp. Honesto Ch. Pacana SJ in 1994, pursued largely, with some modifications, the general thrust and guiding ecclesiological principles envisioned by Bp. Claver.

The factors cited in the foregoing are obviously interwoven. To understand the role of the Diocese of Malaybalay in the post-authoritarian period, these factors have much to offer.

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[40] Poulin interview, 09 June 2001.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.

These paved the way for the Church's post-authoritarian religio-political involvement in the lives of its people in Bukidnon.

5.3 Church leadership in transition

Bp. Gaudencio B. Rosales, appointed coadjutor (assistant with right of succession) bishop of Malaybalay on June 9, 1982, eventually succeeded Bp. Claver on September 14, 1984. Bp. Rosales, born in Batangas City on August 10, 1932 was ordained a diocesan priest on March 23, 1958 and became auxiliary bishop of Manila archdiocese on October 28, 1974.[44] Bp. Rosales claims that his diocesan background was probably a positive factor that fostered deep camaraderie with the local clergy, religious and lay people.[45] His priestly training background, having been schooled at Jesuit-run San José Seminary in Manila for eleven years was probably an aid in making the transition and leading a See which had a fair amount of Jesuit influence.[46] Perceived as 'fatherly' by many priests,[47] Bp. Rosales basically maintained and pursued the major thrusts of the diocese particularly in terms of lay participation, formation of BCCs and responsiveness to justice issues. When he took over the diocese in 1984, he had already familiarised himself with the diocese, local language, social condition, and culture in Bukidnon having stayed for two years in Bukidnon as coadjutor bishop. The different commissions, programs, and apostolates were up and running.

When President Corazon C. Aquino rose to power in 1986, the Diocese of Malaybalay welcomed the event with great rejoicing and hope, but not without anxieties. Although the Aquino administration ushered in a new democratic era, many of the problems besetting the province and the nation during the Marcos years were still prevalent: massive poverty,

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[44] *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*, 393.
[45] *Quinquennial Report of the Diocese of Malaybalay*, Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 1990, 15.
[46] Interview with Bp. Gaudencio Rosales, Former Bishop of the Diocese of Malaybalay, Lipa City, 11 July 2001.
[47] *Quinquennial Report of the Diocese of Malaybalay...*, 1990-1994, 15.

marginalisation and displacement of the *lumad*, rapid deforestation, graft and corruption in the government, patronage politics, and land distribution. The diocese at this point was relatively stable with a fair amount of clarity regarding its apostolic vision for the Church in Bukidnon. The gradual de-militarisation and declining armed rebellion waged in the countryside provided a fragile climate of peace and stability.

On May 13, 1991, the diocese re-opened its radio station (DXDB) with a more powerful reach of 10,000 watts than its erstwhile DXBB.[48] Bp. Rosales shared much of the vision and pastoral priorities that his predecessor had for the diocese. The apostolic vision of the diocese articulated in 1985 and approved by the General Pastoral Assembly in 1989 still remains effective to date.[49] In a nutshell it states:

> The total human and Christian development of the human person through the building and strengthening of the small ecclesial communities, alive in their faith in God –through an identification with Jesus Christ, Lord and Saviour, lived in the concrete through a witness of truth, justice, peace and love.[50]

This apostolic vision was an articulation and development of the pastoral orientation of the local Church during the time of Bp. Claver. Thus the transition between the two local bishops was in general smooth. Nonetheless, he inherited continuing ecclesiastical rift within the Church between the moderates and a few members of the clergy who were aligned with the cause of the armed groups.[51] Over time, however, the conflict diminished considerably in the wake of the decline of the movement in the early 1990s.[52]

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[48] 'Profile: DXDB – AM,' Malaybalay, n.d.
[49] BEC Commission, 'Formation guide...,' 15.
[50] *Quinquennial Report of the Diocese of Malaybalay 1990-1994*, 15-16; In Cebuano, the diocesan apostolic vision reads: *Malangkobon, tawhanon ug kristohanong kalamboan pinaagi sa pagtukod ug paglig-on sa gagmay'ng simbahanong katilingban buhi sa ilang pagtuo sa Ginoo pinaagi kang Hesukristo ang Ginoo ug manluluwas nga gipay-an sa konkreto nga kinabuhi pinaagi sa pagsaksi sa hustisya, kamatuoran, kalinaw ug gugma.* See BEC Commission, 'Formation guide,' 15.
[51] Amora interview, 18 August 2001.
[52] Ibid.

Under the watch of Bp. Rosales, the Diocese of Malaybalay focused on two important targets that strengthened its internal resource and external involvement: spiritual formation and environmental advocacy. Both today remain a visible legacy of his leadership. As regards the latter, through the leadership of the Church, Bukidnon became the first and the only province in the Philippines to date that has lobbied successfully for a total log ban within its territory. It was the first province to draw public attention to the alarming rate of deforestation not only of its region but also of the whole country. As a result, its most significant contribution to democracy building is the initiation of environmental citizenship where constituents had enormous influence over environmental policy and practice in the province and in the country. All these have their small beginnings in the protest movement in Halapitan, the *poblacion* (town centre) in San Fernando, Bukidnon in 1987.

5.4 Forests protection in San Fernando: the emergence of environmental citizenship

The Municipality of San Fernando is located in the southeastern part of Bukidnon bounded by Cabanglasan and Malaybalay to its north; Valencia and Quezon to its west; and Davao del Norte to its east and south. The total land area of the municipality is 77,527 hectares comprising 24 *barangays*.[53] In the early 1970s, eight out of eighteen logging companies operating in Bukidnon had been cutting trees in San Fernando.[54]

The Catholics were only 47.42% or 16,147 of the municipal population while the rest mainly belonged to various Protestant denominations (UCCP, Southern Baptists), INC and a variety of twenty fundamentalist sects (e.g., Universal Brotherhood, *Iglesia sa Dios sa Amahan* [Church of God the Father], Four-Square Gospel Church).[55] The percentage of Catholics in San

[53] Ruth M. Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection: the case of San Fernando, Bukidnon' (MA thesis, Ateneo de Manila University, 1992), 25.
[54] Ibid., 30.
[55] Ibid.; Karl M. Gaspar, *A People's option: to struggle for creation* (Quezon City: Claretians Publications, 1990), 26.

Fernando was relatively low considering that it is close to half the average figure on the province level. Catholics in Bukidnon around that time were placed at 79.5% or 564,782 out of 710,754.[56] Some 28.86% of San Fernando's population were *lumad* (although some of them were already baptised Catholics), and numerous non-Catholic religious groups accounted for the relatively low percentage of Catholics in the area.[57] Still, Catholics were the single largest group of faithful and were extremely influential in the area. Their influence was further buttressed by their affiliation with the GKK (the early form of GSK or BEC) and the personal involvement of their parish priest Patrick Kelly, and his assistant, Charles Gervais, both Scarboro Fathers.[58]

5.4.1 Origins of the protest movement

The protest movement in Halapitan, San Fernando was not entirely a novelty. On October 21, 1981, the locals formed *Pagbugtaw sa Kamatuoran* (PSK, To be Awakened to the Truth) and successfully opposed the construction of a dam in Pulangi River which potentially could displace 30,000 people including inhabitants of San Fernando.[59] The members of PSK were mostly GKK affiliated.[60] By conducting sessions on the adverse effects of the dam; organising the people; sending letters of petition to the National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR), the main proponent of the project; the proposal was shelved. PSK became inactive until it was revived in 1987 to resist further cutting of trees in San Fernando.

In 1987, Fr. Kelly invited the Iligan-based Redemptorist Mission Team (RMT), led by Redemptorist priest Emmanuel Cabajar, to set up GKKs in the parish along the lines of the diocesan apostolic vision.[61] While a number of non-Catholics sympathised with PSK but did not

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[56] *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*, 393.
[57] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection....' 30.
[58] Interview with Diomedes A. Demit, Bukidnon 13 member, Valencia, 07 May 2001.
[59] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 31; Karl M. Gaspar, *et al.*, *Behind the growing trees: an evaluation of the San Fernando Integrated Forestation Project* (Davao City: Kinaiyahan Foundation, Inc., 1994, xv.
[60] Gaspar, *A People's option....*
[61] Rosales, Dency, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1997), xvi.

support the cause, most non-Catholics opposed their advocacy chiefly because it was a Catholic initiative.[62] Seminars on environment awareness were conducted in the Catholic *kapilyas* (chapels) and the prayer sessions were not sufficiently inclusive of non-Catholics.[63] All these were enough to discourage non-Catholics from attending. Further, intense rivalry among the religious groups prevented the believers from rising above their differences to respond to local issues.[64] The GKKs inevitably had to come to terms with environmental issues that were affecting the whole community. RMT offered ecological awareness seminars, biblical reflections and liturgical expressions that lent religious legitimacy to environment protection.[65] This increased GKKs' capacity to advocate and protect the forests near them. In addition, Fr. Kelly and Fr. Gervais in their homilies during liturgical services and meetings with GKKs pressed home the need for collective action to protect their environment from being further denuded.[66] Thus they were not simply reacting against the threat of environmental catastrophe. Rather, their struggle became a faith expression, duly informed by biblical sources and environmental issues.

The environmental threat in San Fernando was a microcosm of the larger threat that Bukidnon was facing. The Environmental Research Division (ERD) described the state of deforestation in Bukidnon in the late 1980s in this way:

> Over the past 25 years there have been 18 logging concessions active in Bukidnon and the adjoining areas. In 1989 they were allowed to cut 891,430 cubic meters of wood.... The remaining forest cover of Bukidnon is less than 25% of the total province area which is about average for the country as a whole.... However, more than half of this forest is logged over. Only 4.0% primary dipterocarp forest and 7.7% mossy forest is left in the province. These last stretches of dipterocarp are now being logged.[67]

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[62] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 31; Gaspar, *A People's option*, 25-26.
[63] Ibid., 25 & 45.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Gaspar, *A People's option*, 53.
[66] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.
[67] Environmental Research Division (ERD), 'Fasting for our forest: a case study for concerned citizens of the environment,' (Quezon City: Manila Observatory, ERD, December 1989), 5.

Although this was the sorry state of the province at that time, the issue had not yet been tackled on a province-wide level either by the government or by the Church and private organisations. Environmental degradation and flooding, as a result, were a real threat to the locals since 65% of the population derived their incomes from agricultural crops and livestock farming.[68] The situation in San Fernando sparked a conflict for the province as a whole to face squarely.

5.4.2 First picket: municipal advocacy

Persistent logging operations, particularly of the Caridad Cabahug-Almendras (CCA) Enterprises and El Labrador Logging Company, Inc., led the PSK in May 1987 to petition the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) and furnished a copy to the (PENRO), asking the two local Department of Energy and Natural Resources (DENR) offices in the province to stop the logging companies from operating in the area.[69] When no satisfactory answer was given, they petitioned President Aquino and furnished another copy to DENR Secretary Fulgencio Factoran Jr., to halt their tree cutting activities.[70] DENR officials claimed that they could not revoke the concession given.[71] The following month, PSK members decided to set up a blockade to deter the CCA trucks from transporting the logs. The first human barricade of about 30 people was formed on July 20, 1987 along the main road and the number of people increased over time varying from 100 to 200 everyday.[72] A total of 20 *kapilyas* (communities of 500 to 700 people), aside from those in the barricade taking different shifts, were involved.[73] This enabled a twenty-four hour vigil by different GKKs, keeping watch one

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[68] PPDO-B, 'Socio-economic profile,' 17.
[69] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 33.
[70] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.
[71] Ibid.
[72] For more details see Gaspar, *A People's option...*, 18-40; Jun Abla, *Defending the forest: a case study of San Fernando Bukidnon, Philippines* (Davao City: Kinaiyahan Foundation, Inc., 1990); Robin Broad and John Cavanagh, *Plundering paradise: the struggle for the environment in the Philippines* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1993), 56-72.
[73] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.

after another, day and night. The Acting Mayor[74] and some of his Municipal Council members supported the picketers.[75]

On the ninth day of the protest assembly, a counter-picket fronting the municipal hall was organised by the Manobo *datus* (chieftains) and leaders of the logging company workers with the support of CCA.[76] These *datus* received a monthly allowance of Php 1,000.00 ($20.00) and other concessions from CCA.[77] During the counter-picket, the *datus* and labour leaders criticised the picketers, Fr. Kelly and the Acting Mayor. The acronym PSK assumed another meaning in one of their slogans: *Pari Sinugdan sa Kasamok* (The priest is the origin of trouble).[78]

On the twelfth day of the blockade, after Fr. Kelly celebrated Mass at the barricade, the Philippine Constabulary started dispersing the crowd by beating the picketers with rattan truncheons, including pregnant Clarita Escoto, the parish secretary.[79] Scores of picketers sustained bruises and cuts. Not to be spared from beating was the statue of Our Lady which was held by picketers.[80] The people tried to protect and surround Kelly who was then singled out and abducted by the police.[81] The picketers decided to accompany him in a dump truck that took him to Malaybalay. He was not detained, however. In Malaybalay, he was released immediately after a brief interrogation-- a clever strategy to disband the picket line.[82]

CCA Enterprises filed charges against the picketers. Picketers were tagged by the military as rebels having links with the NPA, although no such accusations were brought to court.[83] A damage claim of $90,000 was filed by CCA against the picketers, although this was

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[74] Acting local officials (commonly known as 'Officer-in-Charge') were appointed by the national government after the National Assembly (*Batasang Pambansa*) was dissolved by President Aquino. These officials held their positions until the local officials were elected in 1987.
[75] Gaspar, *A People's option....*, 22.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid., 21-22.
[78] Ibid., 27.
[79] ERD, 'Fasting for our forest...,' 12.
[80] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.
[81] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection....,' 33.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 34.

dropped in exchange for the withdrawal of people's claims arising from the physical injuries and forest denudation.[84] In the meantime, PSK members sought help from DENR through Secretary Factoran. They had already linked up with the Institute on Church and Social Issues (ICSI), a Jesuit social research institute at the Ateneo de Manila University campus, and the Manila Chronicle, a national newspaper.[85] Both lobbied for media exposure and pressure. ICSI had a natural affinity with Bukidnon, a Jesuit Mission District. It also had columnists who were writing for the Manila Chronicle. These ties facilitated the diocese's linkage with other external institutes and NGOs. Factoran's response to the situation was swift. He sent his lawyer to assist the picketers during the preliminary hearing in Malaybalay. The people of San Fernando demonstrated their firm resolve to stop logging operations within their municipality by attending the hearing.[86] Both local government officials and church leaders were present at the hearing. Provincial Governor Ernesto Tabios sent four dump trucks to transport the people from San Fernando to Malaybalay.[87] At this hearing, the people from San Fernando sought the termination of the Timber License Agreement (TLA) of CCA enterprises that entitled them to harvest 40,000 has. of trees in Bukidnon.[88]

By way of a follow up, from September 2 to 5, 1987, a delegation of GKK members from San Fernando, accompanied by Fr. Kelly went to DENR's main office in Quezon City.[89] Bp. Rosales joined the group in a meeting with Secretary Factoran and Undersecretary Victor Ramos. DENR granted the group's request that they investigate the damage caused by unabated logging operations.[90] The result of the on-site investigation validated the claims of the

[84] ERD, 'Fasting for our forest...,' 12.
[85] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 34.
[86] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 34.
[89] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church de died for*, 25.
[90] Ibid., 26.

inhabitants of San Fernando. This and other consultations in effect paved the way to an indefinite termination of the CCA's TLA in January 1988.

The CBCP for its part, prompted by the events in San Fernando and the increasing threats on the environment, issued a pastoral letter 'What is happening to our beautiful country?' on January 29, 1988.[91] The letter affirmed that 'to work for justice and to preserve the integrity of creation are two inseparable dimensions of our Christian vocation....'[92] The following year, the AMRSP released a statement 'Choose life – or death,' (basically following up the CBCP statement) and acknowledged the ongoing environmental struggle in Linabo and San Fernando, two Bukidnon municipalities.[93] The MSPC bishops in January 1989 endorsed a total log ban in the Province of Bukidnon.[94] Evidently, San Fernando succeeded in elevating a local issue to become part of the national consciousness.

The *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* (Provincial Council), led by Governor Tabios, supported the total log ban in Bukidnon. In April 1988 the council passed Resolution No. 88-216 addressed to President Aquino which sought 'to ban all logging operations in the Province of Bukidnon.'[95] Although the newly elected local council in San Fernando did not share this view, it was no mean feat for the Provincial local government considering that in many cases the local government officials aligned themselves with elite interests.[96]

5.4.3 Second picket: Provincial advocacy

After the cancellation of the CCA logging franchise, logging operations of the El Labrador Logging Company in the east (Cabanglasan, San Fernando and parts of Agusan del Sur),

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[91] 'What is happening to our beautiful land: a pastoral letter on Ecology,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1980s/1988-ecology.html, 21 February 2003.
[92] Ibid.
[93] AMRSP, 'Choose life – or death,' in *Dawn over darkness...*, ed., Ed Garcia, (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1988), 103-105.
[94] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 59.
[95] Cited in Gaspar, *A People's option...*, 114.
[96] Ibid.

Narideco Incorporated in the south, and Timber Industries of the Philippines Incorporated (TIPI) in the west (Talakag and Pangantucan) spread rapidly.[97] By 1988, PSK became the *Nagpakabanang Katawhan sa San Fernando* (NKSSF or Concerned People of San Fernando) that remained vigilant in their determination to protect their forest. Early that year, NKSSF, in a petition to DENR, pressed for the cancellation of El Labrador's TLA.[98] CENRO acted on their petition and investigated the accusations raised by NKSSF. On November 27, 1988, there being no response after several months of waiting, the group from San Fernando picketed PENRO, the Provincial office of DENR.[99] The following day, after the celebration of Mass at the cathedral, the people carried placards that contained protest messages such as 'Stop armalite logging,' 'Cancel logging permits of El Labrador,' 'End all illegal logging,' and so on.[100]

Aside from church people, local government officials, business groups, students, and civic groups joined the protesters.[101] More than 300 people from seven municipalities (Cabanglasan, Dagumbaan, Impasug-ong, Linabo, Malaybalay, San Fernando, and Valencia) showed up.[102] Although the figure was fewer than the people from San Fernando had expected, the representation of different municipalities showed that the advocacy had strong support from the provincial (local) government. The picketers blocked Sayre Highway, the national road, in Sumpong, Malaybalay whenever trucks loaded with logs were passing through. A total of twenty-three trucks were stopped by the picketers.[103] The protesters then picketed and pitched their *toldas* (tents) near the local DENR and PENRO offices from November 28 to December 7,

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[97] Rosales, *Fr. Satur Neri and the Church he died for*, 58.
[98] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 35.
[99] Vicky Aquino, 'Picket against logging continues,' *Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily*, 1st week of December, 1998, 1.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Gaspar, *A people's option...*, 144-145.
[102] Aquino, 'Picket against logging companies, 1.
[103] Vicky Aquino, 'Picket batok lagging temporaryong gi-undang,' *Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily*, 1st week of December 1998b, 1 & 8.

1988.[104] In a dialogue with DENR Region X in Cagayan de Oro City, the people lobbied for an immediate and complete halt to all logging activities, whether legal or illegal, in Bukidnon.[105] They further pressed for the closure of lumberyards that processed ill-gotten logs and the implementation of reforestation programs.[106] In effect these demands were calling for a total log ban in the province of Bukidnon which local DENR officials could not decide upon. Governor Ernesto Tabios left for Manila and sought an audience with DENR Secretary Factoran.[107] As a result of this meeting, Factoran promised to a dialogue with them.[108] On the strength of this assurance, the picket line was lifted on December 7. Furthermore, El Labrador's logging operation was momentarily suspended, and later cancelled indefinitely.[109]

True to his word, Secretary Factoran visited Malaybalay on December 28, 1988 along with DENR Undersecretary Victor Ramos and DENR Region X officials. He met the provincial and local government officials, led by House Representative Violeta Labaria, Governor Tabios and Mayor of Malaybalay Reginaldo Tilanduca, church leaders, the people of Bukidnon and the picketers in a dialogue in Malaybalay.[110] The meeting was generally positive, although not all the demands were met. The good news was that Factoran declared the cancellation of logging concessions given to CCA Logging Enterprises and El Labrador which was operating at a critical watershed in Nala, San Fernando.[111] The bad news was that the total log ban for Bukidnon was not granted. Nonetheless, Factoran challenged the people to protect and nurture their environment which would then be vacated by these companies. If the people were successful in this effort, he himself would push for the complete cessation of logging activities not only in

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[104] *NASSA News*, 'Anti-logging in Bukidnon,' XXV(6) (December 1988), 4-5.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Aquino, 'Picket batok lagging temporaryong gi-undang,' 1988, 8.
[107] *NASSA News*, 'Anti-logging in Bukidnon,' 5.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 35.
[110] Aquino, 'Si Factoran mibisita sa Bukidnon,' *Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily* (2nd week of December 1998), 1.
[111] *NASSA News*, 'Anti-logging in Bukidnon,' 5.

Bukidnon, but the whole of Region X (basically Northern Mindanao).[112] Finally, he acceded to a request to form a monitoring team drawn from DENR officials, local government officials, church people and local community representatives to conduct investigations on logging activities in the affected areas.[113]

5.4.4 Hunger strike at the DENR National Office: national advocacy

Two weeks after the dialogue with Factoran on January 10, 1989, Bp. Rosales wrote to Senator Heherson Alvarez, Senate Chairperson on the Environment Committee, pressing for a legislation to put an end to wanton logging activities and a total cessation of logging operations in Bukidnon.[114] On January 27, 1989, nineteen (arch)bishops mainly from Mindanao endorsed the plea of Bp. Rosales on behalf of the Diocese of Malaybalay.[115] Since the dialogue with Factoran in December 1988, illegal logging activities still persisted, although relatively fewer than before. In general, the monitoring team established by Factoran ignored community reports on illegal logging practices.[116] Local DENR investigations were hardly carried out because the checkpoints were not placed in strategic positions.[117] Sadly, some locals of San Fernando, including the newly elected mayor, started engaging in *tablon* (flitches) and rattan cutting and trading.[118] Once again the vigilance of the community was tested. Compounding the problem was the fact the logging activities continued stealthily in Bukidnon and nearby provinces.

Fr. Kelly in a meeting in Little Baguio, San Fernando challenged the people to consider expanding the forests protection advocacy beyond the municipality of San Fernando and the province of Bukidnon.[119] This triggered the group to consider another level of advocacy that

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[112] Aquino, 'Si Factoran mibisita sa Bukidnon.'
[113] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 36.
[114] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 59.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Peter Walpole, 'The DENR fails to do homework,' *The Manila Chronicle*, 1 June 1989, 4-5.
[117] Ibid., 4.
[118] ERD, 'Fasting for our forest...,' 15.
[119] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.

included forests protection not only of Bukidnon but the entire country. This campaign, seen as an opportunity to raise national ecological awareness, sought an immediate total log ban for the country.[120] To dramatise their campaign, a hunger strike was staged in Manila. The fasters, known as 'The Magnificent 13' or ' The Bukidnon 13,' pitched their *tolda* (tent) near the DENR main office.[121] Kelly accompanied the group to Manila on September 23, 1989. Fasting began that day. Secretary Factoran and his staff were on hand to welcome the fasters. The hunger strike was not directed at Factoran's handling of the environment issues, although it was public knowledge that he was not in favour of a total commercial log ban,[122] but intended to press the government to address the environmental problems.[123]

The advocacy was supported not only by the Diocese of Malaybalay. Like the municipal advocacy in San Fernando, it had the full backing of the local elite such as Socorro Acosta, Violeta Labaria, José Zubiri, Governor Ernesto Tabios and the local council.[124] Equally important was the linkage and support it got from various NGOs, the media, and civil society groups. ICSI became the organisational base of its advocacy.[125] COPE, a community organising NGO which was already operating in the diocese in the 1970s, coordinated efforts from various NGOs like Haribon Foundation and *Lingkod-Tao Kalikasan* (LTK, Servant-Person Nature), Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center (LRC), the media, religious groups such as the AMRSP, *Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan* (SLB, Church Servant of the People) and Gomburza, and many other groups.[126] As in the EDSA peaceful revolution, AKAPPKA provided spiritual

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[120] Ibid.
[121] The fasters were Clarita Escoto, who became the informal spokesperson for the group, Antoneitta Bongcayao, Serry Pardo, Mila Gastador, Roger Guimba, Allena Agudolo, Asuncion Rodinas, Apolinar Rama, Emma Sanggutan, José Quino, Diomedes Demit, Rodolfo Superioridad, and Agapita Recullo. All hailed from San Fernando, Bukidnon and were members of GKK. See Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 58.
[122] Broad and Cavanagh, *Plundering paradise....*, 66.
[123] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 37.
[124] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 59.
[125] Ibid., 58.
[126] Ibid., 58-59; ERD, Fasting for our forest..., 24 & 29.

sessions for non-violent militant action as the fasters prepared for their advocacy.[127] Clearly at this point, the Diocese of Malaybalay had support from some local and national officials, national NGOs and civil society actors involved in environmental issues. Its partnership with these groups increased media exposure, national projection and pressure, sustained the hunger strike, and provided moral and logistical support.

The Mass was celebrated everyday by Fr. Kelly. It held a press conference which was well attended. Media exposure was quite extensive, notwithstanding competition from the news coverage on the visit of US Vice-President Dan Quayle in Manila and the death of former President Marcos on September 28, 1989.[128] Their cause grabbed the attention of lawmakers both in the Senate and the Lower House who were already crafting legislation on the protection of forests. President Aquino was kept aware of the issues and was thought to be sympathetic to the cause. Bp. Rosales, for his part, wanted to be with the fasters, but the ongoing strike at San Isidro College, a diocesan school, prevented him from leaving the diocese.[129] Jesuit scholastic and environmental scientist Peter Walpole, then part of ICSI, played a crucial role in the dialogue between the fasters and DENR officials that eventually broke the impasse.[130] On October 4, 1989, the 8th and last day of fasting, NKSSF and DENR struck a mutually agreed Seven-Point Agreement.[131] Key provisions in the Seven-Point Agreement included the recruitment of 20 volunteers as forest guards in their locality; a promise to declare a total log ban in Bukidnon after proper endorsements were made by both government and church leaders; the assignment of one lawyer to assist NKSSF in legal cases; and the reforestation of its area.[132]

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[127] Ibid., 30
[128] Ibid., 26.
[129] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 27.
[130] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 38.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid., 38 & 98.

Problems, however, arose in the implementation of the Seven-Point Agreement. First, the lawyer assigned to assist the locals proved to be ineffective and irresponsive to persistent reports of illegal logging activities.[133] Second, although the deployment of 20 volunteer forest guards was initially effective, after a few months, the funds arrived late and finally stopped by January 1991.[134] Third, the reforestation project was only partially successful due to a lack of social preparation. Planting of trees was not properly done on slopes.[135] Fourth, and probably the most crucial, the internal conflict within the newly established *Kapunungan sa Pagpanalipod ug Pagpalambo sa Kinaiyahan* (KPPSK or Organisation for the Protection and Development of the Environment) which succeeded NKSSF sharply divided the organisation and the community it represented.

Nevertheless, these triple feats that the people of San Fernando achieved from the first picket in 1987, the second picket in 1988, and finally the third one in 1989, proceeding from municipal, to the provincial and finally to the national level of advocacy had their humble beginnings in the GKKs that were formed by RMT and supported by Fr. Kelly. In these varying levels of advocacy, a number of significant lessons can be derived. Firstly, the capacity of the GKK experience to engage advocacy campaigns in various levels (local, provincial, and national) was greatly enhanced by hierarchy-laity interaction. Here, Fr. Kelly's role as a liaison between hierarchical leadership and the GKK was of cardinal importance. GKK's cause fitted well into the diocesan apostolic vision. It earned the massive support of the other GKKs, the diocesan leadership, and later included the MSPC and CBCP bishops. Secondly, the support of the local politicians, except the newly elected local officials in San Fernando, was a major boost to environmental advocacy. The Provincial Council Resolution urged President Aquino to halt

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[133] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.
[134] Esquillo, 'Community action on forest protection...,' 48.
[135] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.

logging activities in the Province of Bukidnon. Thirdly, church-civil society partnership was undoubtedly another factor that strengthened the movement. Links with NGOs (e.g., ICSI, COPE, Haribon Foundation, LTK, AKKAPKA, etc) and the media (The Manila Chronicle) proved to be extremely vital. The diocese by itself could not have emboldened its resolve to fight it out in the national arena. In many of the struggles of the local Church in Bukidnon, the Church's position was greatly increased through interaction with NGOs and civil society formation. The local Church then was perceived not as an 'initiator or orchestrator, but as an active source of reference and reflection.'[136] Fourthly, the GKKs were successful in raising ecological and environmental awareness and, more importantly, drawing an environmental constituency in ways which no other group has done at this point in post-authoritarian Philippines. In a sense, the San Fernando experience initiated the people into an understanding and practice of environmental citizenship. In this sense of citizenship, rights no longer are the preserve of individuals as in civil, political, and social rights but also of the collective body since environmental issues affect all the inhabitants. Thus environmental rights are as crucial as the other basic rights. Adherents of this new citizenship are constituents coming from GKKs, *lumad*, local officials, church leaders, civil society organisations, the local elite, and the people of Bukidnon with the support of national NGOs and establishments.

Environmental concerns from now on would figure prominently in government policies and electoral agenda in Bukidnon. In a pastoral letter in preparation for the 1992 elections, Bp. Rosales reminded people to vote for candidates who oppose environmental destruction and do not profit from clearing the forest.[137] But despite the bishop's insistence and voters' education conducted by PPCRV, it seems that the Church did not make much influence. For one, logging company lawyer Nemesio Beltran who fought against the San Fernando barricade was elected

[136] ERD, 'Fasting for our forest...,' 30.
[137] Gaudencio Rosales, Pastoral letter, Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 02 May 1992.

Vice Governor[138] while Carlos Fortich, who was not sympathetic to environmentalists, became Governor. This betrays a weakness in the local Church's influence over the voting public. On the other hand, a few environment-friendly politicians (Zubiris and Acostas) were elected to Congress and local public offices,[139] but whether or not they were elected on the basis of their environmental concerns is a subject worth further enquiry.

5.4.5 Beyond advocacy and protest: the formation of KPPSK

The formation of KPPSK which was duly registered at the SEC (for legal recognition) was a logical choice to implement the Seven-Point Agreement. The emergence of this NGO, no longer church-based, was both a gift and a burden to the people of San Fernando. First, as members were no longer limited to Catholics it meant that non-Catholics could affiliate and be active participants in environmental campaigns. Second, its legal status enabled the organisation to strike contracts for reforestation and other environmental projects. Third, the organisation was fully autonomous with its own constitution and by-laws.

Nevertheless, these benefits had costly repercussions. First, KPPSK was still in its infant stage as participants, not any more as protesters or people's organisation (PO), and already tasked to work as a partner in environmental management. Naturally they were not used to organising an environmental NGO, let alone implementing a reforestation scheme. They were tasked to be the screening committee for the recruitment of workers in the Muleta-Manupali Watershed Development Project (MMWDP), after some $336,000 was released for the project. KPPSK was not comfortable with its new role which inevitably meant good news for the recruited and bad news for the rejected.[140] Without intending to, its role turned out to be a most

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[138] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.
[139] Personal communication with Virgil Estrada, Project Coordinator, The Philippine Eagle Foundation, 27 October 2002.
[140] Interview with Clarita Escoto and Gloria Molte, leaders of KPPSK, San Fernando, Bukidnon, 12 May 2001.

divisive one for the community. Second, the project managers of MMWDP failed to draw more participation from the workers.[141] Both the management and KPPSK could not stop *tabloneros* (small-scale logging).[142] Third, KPPSK's dissociation from the Church did not sit well with some of its members who were used to parish support and the GKK way of proceeding. In addition, the departure of Fr. Kelly and the RMT, who moulded the first GKKs, from the parish marked a new beginning. Issues arose during this transition period which both the new church leadership and the nascent KPPSK did not sufficiently address. These developments speak of the fragility of church-based NGOs and the transition to their autonomy may require some attention from church leaders and support agencies (e.g., donors). And fourth, compounding these issues was the clash of personalities among KPPSK's key leaders and members. Many disgruntled members perceived the formation of a monopolised core leadership within KPPSK.[143] The core leaders, on the other hand, felt they were misunderstood, abandoned and ostracised by the local community.[144] This eventually resulted in the polarisation of KPPSK, and finally the disengagement of many members from the organisation. Out of 140 KPPSK members, only 20 were considered active.[145] To date, KPPSK still exists but is no longer the organisation that the whole community used to claim as theirs.

The shift from protest to participation was not an easy one as far as KPPSK (originally the GKK in San Fernando) was concerned. It is one story to advocate an environmental issue and quite another to be competent in environmental programmes. Still, environmental citizenship must come to terms with competence particularly in shaping environmental policies.[146] Karol Edward Soltan defines competent citizenship as 'knowledge, motives, ideals,

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[141] Gaspar, *A people's option*, 37-39.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Demit interview, 07 May 2001.
[144] Escoto and Molte interview, 12 May 2001.
[145] Esquillo, 'Community action of forest protection...,' 70.
[146] See Andrea Cornwall and John Gaventa, 'From users and choosers to makers and shapers: re-positioning participation in social policy,' *IDS Bulletin* 31(4), (2000), 50-62.

abilities, and skills..., required for successful participation in governance'[147] or, in this case, the shaping and implementation of environmental policies. For environmental citizenship to be effective and competent, it involves a whole range of skills, organisational capacities, knowledge and enabling mechanisms to fashion environmental policies and run programmes. Competent citizenship does not automatically happen after a long period of advocacy as it also requires that the State is strong enough to respond challenges raised by the citizenry.

5.5 Deepening conflict and dilemma in environmental citizenship

Despite and perhaps owing to the impending plan to declare a moratorium on commercial logging activities in Bukidnon province, felling of trees continued stealthily and rapidly. The citizenry's clamour to declare a logging moratorium intensified the year after the Seven-Point Agreement was reached between the DENR and NKSSF. From the Diocesan General Assembly to deanery and parish levels discussions on dwindling forest reserves were held. To many people, a total log ban seemed the only way out. The Diocesan Pastoral Coordinating Council (DPCC), the parish council counterpart in the diocese-wide administration along with various NGOs met with Bp. Rosales on March 28, 1990. In this meeting, they decided to coordinate actions and press for a complete moratorium on logging operations in Bukidnon: an information campaign (through Sunday homilies, BEC discussions, DXDB and *Ang Bandilyo*) to educate the people, signature petitioning for a total log ban, public hearing and mass action.[148] Bp. Rosales in a letter dated March 14, 1990 warned President Aquino that if nothing is done to curb logging in Bukidnon 'our people will go out to the streets soon.... to stop those logging trucks from bringing down those logged timber.'[149] In a pastoral letter on April 5, 1990, he explained the

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[147] Karol Edward Soltan, 'Introduction: civic competence, democracy and the good society,' in *Citizen competence and democratic institutions*, eds, Stephen L. Elkin and Karol Edward Soltan, (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press), 1999, 2.
[148] Rosales, *Fr. Satur Neri and the Church he died for*, 59-60.
[149] Gaudencio Rosales, 'Letter of the Bishop of Malaybalay to President Cory Aquino,' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 14 March 1990.

issues surrounding the campaign for a total log ban in Bukidnon.[150] He urged the people that if a total log ban were not declared in Bukidnon, the people should be ready for mass action in the province.[151] By far, this was his strongest appeal to the people to express their indignation against environmental neglect on the part of the government. Rosales wrote another letter to DENR Regional Executive Director José Gapas who was supportive of the thrust of the diocese, but did not get enough backing from higher DENR officials.[152] In the meantime, a public hearing, was set on April 26-27, 1990 and a province-wide mass action on May 10.[153] The pulpit and the DXDB radio station appeared to be effective means of raising consciousness and educating the people. BECs discussed the issues in their weekly meetings. Every week tens of thousands of people signed the petition calling for a log ban in the province.[154] Evidently at this point the environmental constituency was growing stronger and bigger. DENR's Mindanao and Visayas Regional Head pleaded with Bp. Rosales to stop the campaign and the legal action, but the campaign had gone full steam ahead.[155] Finally, on April 30, 1990, DENR Secretary Factoran sent a telex message declaring a permanent logging ban in the entire province of Bukidnon.[156] On May 22, 1990, Bp. Rosales was deputised as a forest officer of the DENR with authority 'to detect/investigate violation of forestry laws and regulation... to arrest even without warrant any person who has committed, is committing or is about to commit in their presence.... to seize/confiscate the tools and equipment used in committing the offence and the forest products cut, gathered or removed by the offenders....'[157] The absence of implementing guidelines and the terms of the log ban created a host of unresolved issues: how was the order to

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[150] Gaudencio Rosales, 'Pastoral letter,' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 05 April 1990.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Rosales, *Fr. Satur Neri and the Church he died for*, 60.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid., 61.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid., 63.

be enforced? who was to ensure compliance with the order? how long would the total log ban be imposed? Nevertheless the order was noted and promulgated to the general public, to the great delight of the people. Although the specificities of Secretary Factoran's order remained vague, the people were only glad to hear that logging activities in Bukidnon were now considered illegal. Thus Bukidnon made history by being the first, and only province to date, to be declared a commercial logging-free province in the Philippines. In the Southeast Asia region this case is probably the only one in environmental politics whose outcome was lobbied for intensely and successfully by a local Church.[158]

Part of the ambiguity of Factoran's order meant that somebody had to ensure compliance. DENR could neither provide additional forest guards nor was the local government equipped to do it. The law enforcers were inept and helpless in the face of the loggers and at times military officers were in connivance with the loggers.[159] The bishop obviously could not enforce this task all by himself. After a personal communication with the DENR Secretary, the deputisation was extended to 45 priests and deacons of the diocese of Malaybalay on September 11, 1990, [160] although not all priests assumed their role as forest guards.

The idea of conferring upon priests police powers came from DENR, and not from the Church, claimed Bp. Rosales.[161] Some twenty of those deputised were then given a seminar by DENR staff regarding their functions as forest guards.[162] German Catholic aid agency Misereor released funds to equip the priests-foresters with 15 VHF portable radios.[163] Within weeks after the seminar, priests started apprehending those engaged in transporting illegally cut trees.

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[158] See Philip Hirsch and Carol Warren, eds., *The Politics of Environment in Southeast Asia: resources and resistance* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998); Michael J. G. Parnwell and Raymond L. Bryant, eds., *Environmental change in South-East Asia* (London and New York: Routlege, 1996).
[159] Rosales, *Fr. Satur Neri and the Church he died for*, 64 & 108.
[160] Ibid., 64-65;
[161] Rosales interview, 11 July 2001.
[162] Rosales, *Fr. Satur Neri and the Church he died for,* 66.
[163] Ibid., 73.

Vehicles used for transporting the logs were likewise impounded. Priests together with their parishioners or GSK members were effective in curbing illegal log harvesting. First, priests, unlike many arresting officers in the military or police, did not accept *lagay* (bribery). Second, priests in general still commanded some respect from truck drivers. Trucks usually stopped when they were flagged down, but in some cases, they were blocked. Third, the backing from the community, aside from the deputisation of DENR, gave force to effect the confiscation of logs and impounding of vehicles. Naturally this caused stiff opposition from the loggers.

Threats against some priests started to surface in late 1990. Among those threatened were Frs. Cerino Bargola, Danilo Paciente, Nery Lito Satur, and Mariano Chia.[164] For his part, Fr. Satur, parish priest of Guinoyoran, had confiscated loads of ill-gotten logs and lumber in Guinoyoran and Valencia.[165] Cases were subsequently filed against the illegal loggers by the government. On October 14, 1991, Fr. Satur was gunned down, but catechist Jacquiline Lunzaga who was with him backriding his motorbike was allowed to run. Preliminary investigation alleged that Datu Domia and his men had a hand in his killing, but the case did not prosper.[166]

Messages of international solidarity for the Diocese of Malaybalay and condemnation of Fr. Satur's death came from Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, President of the Pontifical Council (COR UNUM); Monsignor Norbert Herkenrath, Secretary General of the German Catholic Bishops' Commission, Misereor, Achen; and Fr Brian Swords, General Superior of the Scarboro Fathers and others.[167] These statements are an indication of the positive contribution that the Diocese of Malaybalay has given particularly to environmental protection.

The death of Fr. Satur did not diminish the thrust of the diocese. The forest guard priests continued their tasks until the harvesting of trees declined. Fr. Bargola later was granted

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[164] Chia interview, 16 May 2001.
[165] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 74
[166] Rosales interview, 11 July 2001. For more details see Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 81.
[167] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 106-107.

permission by the bishop to leave the country as his life was seriously threatened by those who resisted the campaign of the diocese.

The deputisation of priests in a diocese as foresters with police powers is the first ever in the history of the Church in the Philippines, and probably in the whole world. The positive side of this deputisation is the official recognition of the government of the good work that the diocese was pursuing. A few members of the clergy had quiet misgivings about this scheme as they found it difficult to reconcile being as a pastor and a policeman at the same time.[168] Bp. Rosales was fully aware of its terrible consequences. He himself admitted, 'the priesthood and police powers did not mix well.'[169] Nonetheless, the helplessness of the government officials, the ineffective government agencies (DENR, CENRO, PNP, AFP, judiciary), the stakes of some military officials who were many a time in collusion with illegal loggers, and the wanton illegal logging activities left them with no other option but to take up the task.[170] While the authorisation of priests as foresters was criticised by loggers and even by a few ecclesiastical leaders in Mindanao, some bishops were sympathetic to the cause of the Bukidnon Church.[171] Bp. Emeritus Claver showed his sympathy in this way: 'There is only one word to describe their option: 'Desperation! Or, as moralists would put it, the last resort.'[172] Given the helplessness of the situation, the Church had to take up the task of enforcing the law protecting the environment, at least in the short run. Indeed the option taken curbed logging operations considerably. In very few extreme cases, a couple of priests were carrying guns and a group of armed lay people

[168] Interview with Fr. Pablo Salengua, Indigenous People's Apostolate (IPA) Coordinator, Diocese of Malaybalay, Valencia, 13 July 2001.
[169] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 65.
[170] Ibid., 108; Rosales interview, 11 July 2001.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Rosales, *Fr. Neri Satur and the Church he died for*, 65-66.

escorted their priest during operations in Sinayawan.[173] Bp. Rosales was generally opposed to such an arrangement, but was thought to have tolerated it.[174]

The deputisation of priests as forest protectors, however, was not an ideal arrangement in the long run. Firstly, Secretary Factoran's order to assign police powers to priests meant that environmental law enforcement was now effectively in the hands of the clerics, and this was relieving the government, particularly its law enforcers, of their culpability. This arrangement, although effective in environmental protection, masked a serious problem: the corruption of the law enforcers. Law enforcers were also suspect in the logging activities, but nothing was done to enhance their police powers and prosecute the corrupt officials. Secondly, on the part of the Church, adding police powers to priests raised issues regarding their role as pastors. But even as law enforcers, Attorney Gamolo himself claims that deputisation of priests was not the ideal arrangement since they were not trained as such.[175] Nonetheless, as an emergency measure, the deputisation of priests-foresters in the short run at least, restored the primacy of law (total log ban) and deterred the logging of trees.

5.6 Forest protection barricades from Wao to Malaybalay: from church-led to church-supported advocacy

In the post-PCP II period, the local Church in Bukidnon has deeply embedded environmental advocacy in its pastoral vision. The Diocesan General Pastoral Assembly, the Priests and Religious Assembly, and Deanery meetings were periodically held in ways that continually evaluated and updated the diocese's pastoral thrusts and priorities along the lines of PCP II. Towards the end of 1992, Bp. Rosales was appointed archbishop of Lipa and thereafter installed. Fr. Medardo 'Dards' M. Estaniel, for the time being, became the apostolic administrator of the

[173] Interview with Fr. Medardo Estaniel, former Apostolic Administrator and former Social Action Director, Diocese of Malaybalay, Malaybalay, 18 June 2001.
[174] Ibid., Chia interview, 16 May 2001.
[175] Gamolo interview, 11 May 2001.

diocese until the espicopal ordination and installation of Fr. Honesto Ch. Pacana SJ as the third bishop of Malaybalay on March 24, 1994. Bp. Pacana joined the Jesuits on June 20, 1951 and was ordained a priest on June 10, 1965.[176] He founded the Bukidnon Institute of Catechetics (BIC) in 1969 in the same year when he set foot in Bukidnon as assistant parish priest in Malaybalay. He became Rector of St. John Vianney Theological Seminary from 1991 to 1994. Born in Cagayan de Oro City on January 22, 1933, Bp. Pacana is considered as the first Mindanao-born cleric to be ordained bishop. He served as the chairperson of CBCP's Episcopal Commission on Culture (ECC) for three terms since its foundation in 1994.[177]

Logging issues continued to disturb the diocese even after the declaration of the total log ban in the province. This time the issue is not within the province, but within the diocese. In ecclesiastical terms, the municipality of Wao in Lanao del Sur is part of the diocese. In political division, however, Lanao del Sur belongs to the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). While a total log ban was still effective in Bukidnon, the Church argued that cutting of trees in Calaga Range, Lanao del Sur could potentially affect its inhabitants. In 1995, the adverse effects of TIPI's logging operations in the municipalities of Bumbaran and Wao, Lanao del Sur (southwesternmost parts of Bukidnon) had been felt by nearby places. In particular, Kalilangan suffered heavy flooding on two occasions in 1995.[178] Lack of forest cover due to heavy cutting of trees was pointed to as the main cause of the flooding. On behalf of the delegates of the Priests and Religious Assembly, Bp. Pacana wrote a letter on November 29, 1995 addressed to DENR Secretary Victor Ramos about the environmental condition in Wao.

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[176] Philippine Province, *Catalogus Provinciae Philippinae Societatis Iesu 2001*, 06 October 2001, 110.
[177] CBCP-ECC is directly involved in concerns and issues around the Indigenous Peoples Apostolate (IPA). See CBCP-ECC, 'Church initiates in promoting intercultural dialogue in Mindanao,' (Manila: CBCP-ECC [Episcopal Commission on Culture], 2000), 28.
[178] Bp. Honesto Ch. Pacana, Letter to President Joseph E. Estrada, Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 25 February 1999.

He called for the cancellation of TIPI's TLA and a logging ban for the provinces of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur.[179]

In the meantime, the BECs were given seminars on environmental awareness as part of their formation programme from 1996 to 1998.[180] The parish priest of Wao, Fr. Cosme Damian 'Ming' Almedilla was constantly engaged with his parishioners, particularly the BEC members and the SAC-Wao, with regard to this logging issue. His presence and interventions from the back stage proved very effective in building consensus.[181] Fr. Almedilla was always present in meetings and therefore there was no need to consult him since he was as involved as anybody else in the deliberations. He was ably assisted by Edna Espinosa, the SAC-Wao chairperson.

On December 25, 1998, some 7,153 concerned citizens many of whom were parishioners or BEC members in the parish of Wao signed a letter addressed to President Joseph E. Estrada, once again, seeking the cancellation of TIPI's TLA and the imposition of a total log ban in the ARMM.[182] This letter was further bolstered by Bp. Pacana in a letter on February 25, 1999, addressed to President Estrada on behalf of the 250 delegates of the Diocesan Pastoral General Assembly.[183] Bp. Pacana pointed out the seriousness of TIPI's logging activities since it was affecting the watershed area of Lake Lanao from which 70% of electric power in Mindanao is sourced.[184] DENR Secretary Antonio Cerilles sent a memorandum on April 14, 1999 to DENR Regional Executive Directors of the different regions concerned stipulating the temporary moratorium on logging activities within ARMM, excepting those TLA holders without reported

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[179] Bp. Honesto Ch. Pacana, 'Letter to DENR Secretary Victor Ramos,' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malybalay, 29 November 1995.
[180] SAC-Wao, 'Chronology of events of the campaign for total log ban,' n.d.
[181] Interview with Edna Espinosa, SAC-Wao chairperson, Camp Phillips, Bukidnon, 23 June 2001.
[182] Diocese of Malaybalay, 'Letter to President Joseph E. Estrada: demand for the cancellation of the Timber License Agreement of the Timber Industries of the Philippines Inc., Total log ban in the ARMM,' Malaybalay, Diocese of Malaybalay, 25 December 1998.
[183] Pacana, 'Letter to President Joseph E. Estrada,' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 25 February 1999.
[184] Ibid.

violations.[185] Nonetheless, this memorandum was revoked on June 11, 1999. The following day, the parishioners of Wao [later known as *Lihok* (Action)-Wao] through the leadership of SAC-Wao finally decided to launch a protest human barricade in Panang, Wao to put an end to the transport of logs from Wao to Bukidnon and then Cagayan de Oro City.[186] To sustain this protest movement, SAC-Wao built a broad formation of anti-logging advocates which became the Coalition Against Logging in Lanao (CALL). These environmental advocates included a wide range of representation from various sectors: church people, students, green activists, legal experts, indigenous peoples and other NGOs.[187] Pro-logging groups backed by loggers also staged their counter-protest barricade. In the meantime, several letters were sent to DENR Secretary Cerilles.[188] Some 15 media practitioners made an on-site investigation on July 22, 1999.[189] Four teams of inspectors investigated the alleged violations of TIPI, but the teams recommended that TIPI can continue its operation since the licensee did not grossly violate the TLA conditions.[190] The Regional Director of DENR then allowed TIPI to continue its operations.[191] Bp. Pacana led the clergy of Bukidnon in a dialogue with Secretary Cerilles on July 29, 1999.[192] The following day, SAC-Wao struck a tactical alliance with Task Force Macajalar (TFM), an environmentalist NGO based in Cagayan de Oro City.[193]

With TFM, they moved their advocacy to the Congress. From September 13 to 24, representatives of SAC-Wao and TFM lobbied at the Senate and the House of Representatives,

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[185] *Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily*, 'Cerilles orders to stop timber transport from ARMM, 1st week of May 1999; 1 & 4; SAC-Wao, 'Chronology of events of the campaign for total log ban.'
[186] Espinosa interview, 23 June 2001.
[187] Hilda Hablado and Mel Velez, 'Zubiri averts possible violence between anti-logging protesters and Wao Mayor's group,' *Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily*, 1st week of August 1999; 1 & 4.
[188] Balansag interview, 02 May 2001.
[189] Hablado and Velez, 'Zubiri averts possible violence between anti-logging protesters and Wao Mayor's group, 1.
[190] Hilda Hablado, 'Let the logging licensee continue its operation – Pascual,' *Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily*, 3rd week of August 1999, 1 & 4.
[191] Ibid.
[192] SAC-Wao, 'Chronology of events of the campaign for total log ban,' n.d.
[193] Ibid.

while the 'Inventory-Investigation' was going on.[194] While in Manila, they also sought an audience with Cardinal Sin to gain more support from the Archbishop of Manila. Meanwhile, to avert bloody confrontation with a counter-protesting group of pro-TIPI, the Wao barricade was lifted on September 28, 1999.[195] Nonetheless, the report of the 'Inventory-Investigation' recommended that logs can be transported, but without the signatures of Fr. Almedilla and Fr. Francisco Montecastro, a Jesuit parish priest of Lumbia, Cagayan de Oro City.[196] Both were initially party to this investigation. On October 27, Secretary Cerilles lifted the ban on log transport.[197] Seeing no end in sight, SAC-Wao formed a partnership with the People's Alliance for Change (PEACE), another multisectoral coalition based in Bukidnon.[198] These alliances (with PEACE and TFM) were vital in putting pressure against logging transport in Cagayan de Oro and in Bukidnon. The advocacy was gaining strength. Meanwhile, Fr. Almedilla and Edna Espinosa both received death threats.[199] When it became too much for the former to bear, Bp. Pacana eventually transferred him to another parish towards the end of the year.

When all the negotiations failed, a blockage of logs being transported was set up in Wao, but this was easily dispersed. After overcoming the barricade in Wao, another blockade was set up on November 28, in Maramag, close to the Southern Bukidnon Hospital. At this juncture, PEACE, *Lihok*-Wao, BECs, *lumad*, and various NGOs, were at the forefront of the movement. Ex-priest Vicente Abrogueña, PEACE Chairperson, maintains that Bp. Pacana did not want the Church leadership to be at the forefront of the protest movement.[200] Instead the Church assumed a supportive role, backing up the protest movement by means of logistical support, volunteers

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[194] Ibid.
[195] Espinosa interview, 23 June 2001.
[196] SAC-Wao, 'Chronology of events of the campaign for total log ban,' undated.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Almedilla interview, 23 June 2001; Espinosa interview, 23 June 2001.
[200] Interview with Vicente N. Abrogueña, Chairperson of People's Alliance for Change (PEACE), Malaybalay, 25 May 2001.

who picketed in the barricade, celebration of Masses, religious presence, the media (through DXDB) and legal aid.[201] Some 200 people composed of *lumad*, PEACE members, BECs and other church people in Maramag obstructed the transport of logs.[202] Although they knew they were going to be dispersed the following day, they did not expect that the police dispersal units of about 300 would come early next morning.[203] The barricade in Maramag was dispersed at 2:00 early morning on December 10, 1999. Scores of protesters were hit by truncheons. The dispersal was legally sanctioned. A Sheriff presented the Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) but its validity applied only to Maramag.[204] It was then decided that they set up more barricades along Sayre Highway particularly in Valencia and Malaybalay, the two most populated areas in Bukidnon. The barricade in Valencia was overcome without difficulty. The one in Aglayan (South Malaybalay) was likewise removed easily, but the one in Kalasungay (North Malaybalay) held the 23 truck loads of logs at bay on December 16, 1999.[205] About 200 picketers in Kalasungay held the barricade while court litigation was going on.[206] On January 24, the loggers were forced to drop their logs because the condition of the trucks was deteriorating.

Long before the stalemate in Kalasungay, both TIPI and the protesters had traded court cases against each other. Cases were appealed to the Court of Appeals and finally to the Supreme Court that finally decided in favour of the protesters. The court ruled that the TRO issued in Marawi had no validity (outside of Lanao del Sur) in Bukidnon where the logs were held up.[207]

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[201] Balansag interview, 02 May 2001.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Interview with Fr. Bernard Saburao, former BEC Desk Coordinator, Diocese of Malaybalay, Malaybalay, 22 May 2001.
[206] Ibid.
[207] *Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily*, 'Sec. Cerilles orders to stop timber transport from ARMM, 1st week of May 1999; 1 & 4.

The trucks were finally impounded and logs worth $270,000 were confiscated and placed under the custody of the government.[208]

The Wao to Malaybalay forest protection advocacies were instructive on a number of scores. First, like the position of Fr. Kelly in San Fernando, Fr. Almedilla and SAC-Wao chairperson Edna Espinosa were crucial links to the broader church leadership in the diocese (e.g. Bp Pacana) and the wider Philippine Church (e.g., the CBCP, MSPC, Cardinal Sin). Hierarchy-laity mutual interaction certainly boosted the Church's campaign.

Second, the role of the Church leaders was beginning to shift, from one that principally led the cause to one that took a more supportive and enhancing role. The protest was initially church-led in the parish of Wao, but as the momentum gained support, the Church leadership formed a partnership with PEACE, *Lihok*-Wao, TFM and other NGOs taking the lead role, while the church hierarchy took on a supportive role. These civil society groups formed a natural alliance with the Church because environmental concerns were a shared interest among these groups. The involvement of some church people in these groups also facilitated the collaboration. Ex-priest Vic Abrogueña and Fr. Jun Balansag were the leading figures in PEACE. Edna Espinosa was SAC coordinator and key leader in *Lihok*-Wao. Additionally, the issue of environmental protection was a mutual concern of the Church and civil society actors dating back to the San Fernando advocacy. Bp. Pacana insisted that civil society groups be at the forefront of the struggle, not that the Church was afraid or ambivalent, but because he wanted to explore another level of advocacy that would give NGOs their rightful political space in people's participation and protest.[209] Although to some extent this was reflected in the case of Bukidnon 13, now that civil society groups have started to emerge, the Diocese of Malaybalay was quite conscious of its own niche in advocacy and protest movements. By doing this, Bp. Pacana recast

[208] Saburao interview, 22 May 2001.
[209] Pacana interview, 24 May 2001; Abrogueña interview, 25 May 2001.

new ways of church intervention which were in support of, or in partnership with civil society, and no longer as the sole political actor in democracy building. In this new found partnership with civil society, the Church contributed to mobilising its constituents (BEC members, parishes, schools), logistical support (food, transportation), the media back up (DXDB), and sheer presence in the barricades. The leaders of civil society groups, on the other hand, found partnership with the Church very engaging and positively empowering.[210]

Third, the successful environment protest movement once again proved that an environment constituency was still a strong and influential force in environment policies and practices even beyond the territory of Bukidnon. Malaybalay's anti-pine tree cutting advocacy in 1997 and 1998 is another display of its environmental protection lobby. But once again the constituency has limited its involvement in environmental advocacy. The formation of this environmental constituency marked the beginning of a new citizenship that enabled interest articulation, representation and participation through organised groups. Fragile state apparatuses (e.g., the judiciary, local and national executive branches of the government) and the democratic institutions for settling environmental contestations were tried, challenged and tested. Indeed Bukidnon's civil society actors did not simply assert environmental rights of the people, but they also engaged the legislators in framing an environmental policy (e.g., a total log ban) for the country. Albeit the attempt was unsuccessful, these initiatives were concrete ways of restoring confidence in democratic institutions, strengthening the civil society network and exploiting democratic space, actions which were not possible during the authoritarian period. Nonetheless, translating the environmental constituency into electoral votes was another matter. Moreover, environmental citizenship was not enough in implementing policies. Competent citizenship was equally needed, but this presupposes that the State likewise has the capacity to implement

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[210] Ibid.

such policies. The inability of the State to enforce the law (e.g., involvement of the military in logging, ineffective police force) partly militated against the very institutions that would have responded to environmental issues. Thus, a strong and competent citizenship needed an equally strong state.

5.7 Commitment to human rights

In the 1987 Charter, the promotion of human rights and social justice are key provisions (see Chapter Four). Many of these provisions were eventually translated into legislative bills. In many cases, violations of human rights, especially those which are protected in the 1987 Charter, continued beyond 1987, and thus challenging the rule of law.[211] Conventionally received wisdom argues that the primacy of law in post-authoritarian context is important if not essential in a democratic regime.[212] Corruption, clientelism and patronage politics are an indication that the laws are not in place or adequately enforced. A democratic regime, therefore, subjects the State or any non-state actor to the legal framework.

The Diocese of Malaybalay in the post-authoritarian period was deeply committed to making the legal framework operate, giving the law its rightful place in a democratic polity. The rights pursued and waged in these cases are no longer anchored on individual rights, but expanded to include collective entitlements, including agrarian reform beneficiaries and the indigenous peoples (IPs). Even when laws had been passed regarding agrarian reform and the IPs, the people concerned still needed to assert their rights within the legal framework and press for the implementation of these laws.

A crucial instrument in the diocesan advocacy of human rights was its Legal Aid Bureau (LAB), thanks in part to the consistent financial backing of Misereor. Like many local Churches

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[211] See Chapter Four for discussion on death penalty and the limits of 'rule of law.'
[212] Juan Méndez, Guillermo O'Donnell, and Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, eds., *The (un)rule of law and the underprivileged in Latin America*, eds., Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999.

in the Philippines, the legal aid component of its diocesan programme was politicised at the inception of martial law. The LAB in the diocese began in 1971 when Fr. Vincent Cullen SJ was the Social Action Director. Atty. Rube S. Gamolo was its lawyer and has since then occupied the office until the present day. Atty. Gamolo assisted COPE community organisers (COs). SCAPS and TFA were involved in many of their para-legal trainings and actual cases of human rights violations.[213] Gamolo reports that during the authoritarian period, for the most part, they handled cases pertaining to human rights violations as consequences of 'rampant militarisation resulting in hamletting and displacement from their homes' due to the conflict between the military and the NPA.[214] Many a time, LAB linked up with legal agencies such as the FLAG, IBP, Citizen Legal Assistance Office (CLAO), and Public Attorney's Office (PAO).[215]

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) reports that post-authoritarian cases of human rights violations in Bukidnon ranged from 4 cases in 1993 to 89 in 1989.[216] From 1988 to 1992 (partly during the Aquino administration) the average number of cases per year registered at 30.6 while from 1993 to 1998 (Ramos administration), the annual average reported cases dropped to 8.3.[217] This simply shows, as in the national trend, a declining incidence of reported human rights violations pertaining to civil liberties.

In the post-authoritarian period, LAB handled four main tasks. The first task was the actual work on court cases. On the average, some 120 to 150 cases were tackled every year.[218] Sixty to seventy five percent of the cases were alleged criminal offences, that is, harassments

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[213] Gamolo interview, 11 May 2001; Rube S. Gamolo, 'Legal aid accomplishment report for the period: June 1, 1993 – May 31, 1994.'
[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.; see other Legal aid accomplishment reports prepared by Rube S. Gamolo.
[216] Commission on Human Rights, 'Statistical report of the Commission on Human Rights – 10,' Region X, Cagayan de Oro City, January – December 1998; Commission on Human Rights, 'Statistical report of the Commission on Human Rights – 10,' Region X, Cagayan de Oro City, January – December 2000.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Rube S. Gamolo, 'Legal aid accomplishment report for the period: June 1, 1996 – May 31, 1997.'

against tenants and farm-settlers, while the rest were civil cases.[219] Most, if not all, of the diocese's court cases were either assisted or handled by the legal aid office. The second task was the para-legal educational training seminars. COPE's COs in Bukidnon were in many cases also trained in para-legal advocacy by LAB during the martial law years.[220] Para-legal sessions continued beyond the authoritarian period. These seminars were typically weekend sessions, running for two to three weekends, at times literally under the trees.[221] These para-legal seminars were complemented by three times a week radio programs by Atty. Gamolo himself.[222] These sessions inevitably helped to empower the local communities in documenting cases and asserting their legal rights.[223] The third task was providing other legal services such as legal advice and notary services to its clients. Finally, LAB established links with regional and national cause-oriented groups advocating judicial reforms.

LAB played an instrumental role in the legal defence of the church workers, *lumad*, and poor farmers particularly those who did not have access to mainstream legal services. The legal aid enabled the poor to have their cases heard even as far as the Supreme Court. In some instances, out-of-court settlements were pursued. In many cases, by participating in court litigations and winning court cases, it had an unintended effect of restoring confidence in the judiciary which for many years was a source of frustration for the marginalised poor. Thus the legal aid office buttressed the primacy of the law, albeit some laws were not fair to the poor. Further, by conducting para-legal training seminars, the clients became more conscious of their rights as citizens within a democratic framework. These are but some indications of the Church's commitment to human rights and the primacy of law in the democratisation of

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[219] Rube S. Gamolo, 'Accomplishment report of the Legal Aid Bureau of the Diocese of Malaybalay from June 1, 1991 to June 30, 1992.'
[220] Gamolo interview, 11 May 2001.
[221] Rube S. Gamolo, 'Legal Aid Bureau accomplishment report: July 1, 2000 – December 31, 2000.'
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ibid.

Bukidnon. In this direction, the Bukidnon Church was a crucial local actor in expanding the notion of human rights to include collective rights of the farmers and indigenous peoples. The two cases presented herewith demonstrate this point more specifically.

5.7.1 Agrarian collective rights : the struggle of the *Mapadayonong Panaghiusa sa Lumad Alang sa Damlag* (MAPALAD, Progressive Unity of Natives for the Future) farmers

The MAPALAD case was not simply a local issue in Bukidnon but it also represented the plight of the *lumad* and poor farmers seeking land ownership under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). The MAPALAD issue was a litmus test of the government's commitment to implement land reform. Due to the significance of the case, national NGOs took on board the issue with some support from the diocese. Thus the MAPALAD advocacy was an attempt to enforce the rule of law. Further, it was a political opportunity to assert the farmers' formal rights embedded within the legal framework.

The MAPALAD farmers (mostly *Higa-onons*) were issued a Certificate of Land Ownership covering an area of 144 hectares in San Vicente, Sumilao municipality, Bukidnon on September 25, 1995 by the DAR.[224] The Norberto Quisumbing Sr., Management and Development Corporation (NQSRMDC) in cooperation with the Bukidnon Agro-industrial Association (BAIDA), a project of the provincial governor, moved swiftly to seek land conversion on this rich agricultural area to make it an agro-industrial site.[225] DAR repeatedly rejected their petitions in 1994 and 1995 in favour of the 137 MAPALAD farmers who would be CARP beneficiaries.[226] Provincial Governor Carlos O. Fortich envisioned BAIDA to produce 'an Industrial Park; Specialized Education Center for vocation skills..., Commercial,

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[224] Mariano V. Nava, 'Case study on the MAPALAD campaign: winning when one is in the right,' Cagayan de Oro City, 12 January 1997.
[225] Lina Sagaral Reyes, 'FVR violated own order in Bukidnon Carp case?' *Sun Star Cagayan de Oro*, 19 July 1997; 1 & 19.
[226] Nava, 'Case study on the MAPALAD campaign...,' 3.

Recreational and Entertainment Areas; Affordable housing; Hotels & Ledges; Agricultural Products Processing Center & Light to Medium Scale Manufacturing.'[227] This vision, he claimed, would accelerate development in the area and provide more jobs to the locals. Fortich, on behalf of NQSRMDC/BAIDA, appealed to the Office of the President pressing for the land conversion of the contested area.[228] As a result, DAR's decision was overturned by President Ramos' Executive Secretary Ruben Torres in 1996. DAR sought a reconsideration of the decision. In the meantime, NQSRMDC filed a court case against DAR and MAPALAD farmers.[229] The court then issued an order prohibiting the farmers from entering the disputed area.[230] The farmers defied the prohibition but were evicted by armed guards led by cashiered Col. Alexander Noble within two days when they occupied it on July 16, 1997.[231] Secretary Torres in his memorandum in March 1996 had granted the land conversion.[232]

Secretary Torres's pattern of land conversion was no secret to agrarian reform advocates. By October 1997, seven cases had been exposed to the public.[233] Clearly the MAPALAD's case was not isolated but a trend curbing efforts to implement the CARP. The farmers dramatised their claim by staging hunger strikes in front of the DAR main office in Quezon City and in its regional office in Cagayan de Oro City on October 9, 1997.[234] The strikers broke their fast on the 28th day. On November 7, 1997, President Fidel V. Ramos forged a 'win-win' formulation where 100 hectares will go to the MAPALAD farmers and 44 to NQSRMDC.[235] The Supreme Court, however, reversed President Ramos' formulation. After many appeals, the Supreme Court

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[227] Ibid.
[228] Carlos O. Fortich, 'Letter to His Excellency President Fidel V. Ramos,' 03 November 1997.
[229] Nava, 'Case study on the MAPALAD campaign...,' 3.
[230] Ibid., 3-4.
[231] Lina Sagaral Reyes, 'Torres ignored Ramos win-win solution,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 22 October, 1997b; 1; Ma. Ceres P. Doyo, 'Bukidnon CARP awardees could lose land, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 09 October 1997, 9
[232] Reyes, 'Torres ignored Ramos win-win solution, 1.
[233] Bp. Francisco Claver, 'Letter to His Excellency Fidel V. Ramos,' 06 October 1997.
[234] Reyes, 'Torres ignored Ramos win-win solution, 1 & 20.
[235] Bp. Honesto Ch. Pacana, 'Has not my soul grieved for the poor? Pastoral Letter.' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 01 June 1998.

ruled with finality on August 19, 1999 in favour of the NQSRMDC.[236] By this time President Joseph E. Estrada had succeeded President Ramos. The MAPALAD farmers and the Task Force MAPALAD felt disappointed at the new DAR Secretary Horacio Morales' suggestion to relocate the farmers and how in general the government dealt with them.[237] To date, there are no signs that the land is being converted as an agro-industrial site that BAIDA envisioned. In July 2001, there was an attempt of the landowner to sell the land to the local government, but the incumbent Provincial Governor refused the offer.[238]

The MAPALAD case betrayed serious cleavages within the local and national church leadership, quite unlike the other campaigns of the diocese. The MAPALAD farmers sought the help of the Diocese of Malaybalay through Bp. Pacana. The bishop readily offered his backing through pastoral letters, an information campaign, and through moral, legal, logistical, and spiritual support. Fr. Balansag likewise gave similar moral and spiritual boosting to the farmers. Nonetheless, the influence of Governor Fortich, Mayor Baula and the Quisumbings seemed to be dominant in the area. The parish priest of Sumilao, Fr. Filemon Ares Jr., and most parish lay leaders of the MAPALAD farmers did not support the cause of the farmers. The parish priest at one point dissuaded the farmers from entering the Quisumbing property.[239] Fr. Ares' relatively close association with his parishioners and some local officials (who endorsed Fortich's position) probably factored in his decision to withdraw his support for the farmers. The locals (including many lay leaders and parishioners) supported BAIDA's promise of development in the area because that would potentially mean more jobs and income for the local area. The conflicting position of the Church undermined the diocese's overall support for the farmers. The

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[236] Ibid.
[237] Lina Sagaral Reyes, 'Reversal of fortunes for Mapalad farmers,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 24 October 1998, 18; AR Now, 'The People's campaign for agrarian reform (AR) now network press statement,' 26 August 1999.
[238] Balansag interview, 25 July 2001.
[239] Interview with Rene Piñas and Peter Tuminhay, MAPALAD officers, Sumilao, Bukidnon, 26 July 2001.

Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro and other NGOs picked up the advocacy during the hunger strike in Cagayan de Oro City. Seeing the issue as a critical test of land reform, various regional and national NGOs, POs, academic communities, and concerned citizens became involved. The media coverage was very extensive and, by and large, sympathetic to the cause of the farmers. Church groups in the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro, Archdiocese of Manila and other church leaders, including Cardinal Sin and other religious groups issued their statements of solidarity with the fasters and made known their unqualified support for the MAPALAD farmers.[240]

A controversial allegation against the hunger strike was the accusation that not all of the hunger strikers and MAPALAD farmers were genuine beneficiaries of agrarian reform. Archbishop Oscar V. Cruz, CBCP President, and Sr. Rosanne Mallilin, Executive Secretary of NASSA, although both were supportive of CARP in principle, were thought to have held that not all of the MAPALAD fasters were real beneficiaries.[241] While this is true, the non-beneficiaries were farmers themselves, relatives or acquaintances of the hunger strikers, who sympathised with the MAPALAD farmers as they shared the lot of the beneficiaries.[242] They joined the protest hoping that a favourable decision for the MAPALAD farmers may also be applied in their case.[243] Thus despite its repeated pronouncements urging the government to enact and implement the land reform bill, sadly the CBCP did not issue any unequivocal statement of support.[244] Cardinal Sin was nearly led to believe the same position were it not for the report given him by Fr. Joel E. Tabora SJ.[245] Cardinal Sin eventually decided to visit the fasters and

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[240] Interview with Raul Socrates Banzuela, Philippine Agrarian Reform Foundation for National Development, PARFUND Executive Director, Malaybalay, Bukidnon, 26 July 2001.
[241] Ibid.
[242] Nava, 'Case study on the MAPALAD campaign...,' 1.
[243] Ibid.
[244] The CBCP, however, in a statement commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognised in passing the plight of many struggling farmers like the MAPALAD farmers who became victims of 'land conversions in the name of development.' See 'A Pastoral letter on human rights,' available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1990s/1998-human_rights.html, 21 February 2003.
[245] Banzuela interview, 26 July 2001.

openly supported their cause. This reveals that the national church leadership, like the local Church in Bukidnon, was not wholly convinced of the worthiness of the MAPALAD issue. The internal cracks within the national and local church leadership weakened the overall church support for the advocacy of the MAPALAD farmers.

The MAPALAD's case, unlike the Bukidnon 13 of San Fernando, was mostly an advocacy of national and regional agrarian NGO groups and other religious organisations beyond the Diocese of Malaybalay. In terms of the pluralist view of democracy used in this study, the MAPALAD case illustrated that democracy is alive in the Philippines. The Church (although not collectively) and many NGOs tried to use the avenues for participation and lobbying within the legal framework. This in itself was a democratic impulse, but democratisation has its own limits. The Supreme Court's interpretation of the agrarian reform law legitimised the claim of the landowners. Once again, not everything that is legal (or interpreted as legal by authorities) addresses fundamental rights. Democratisation, as defined and used in this study, does not necessarily respond to unequal power relations between classes. Nonetheless, two important gains were achieved in this struggle: national consciousness of the agrarian reform issue leading to the enactment of the agrarian bill the following year and the use of the agrarian issue as a national electoral issue.[246] Further, this case demonstrated that it was possible to lobby for the collective rights of the farmers as the legal beneficiaries of land reform. Despite the failed bid to claim ownership of the land, Bp. Pacana summarised the 'victory' in this way: 'the MAPALAD farmers have awakened the whole country to related issues by their protest action and hunger strike that disturbed the conscience of the nation.'[247]

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[246] Ibid.

[247] Pacana, 'Letter to MAPALAD farmers and support groups,' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 08 September 1999.

5.7.2 The installation of Quezon Manobo Tribes Association (QUEMTRAS)

The local Church's involvement with indigenous peoples dates back to the mid-1950s when Fr. Vincent Cullen SJ started working with the *lumad* covering places like Impasug-ong, Kalabugao, Kalugmanan, Zamboanguita and Cabanglasan for more than 30 years.[248] He initiated many community-based programmes such as literacy and numeracy campaigns, socio-economic projects, social analysis sessions, prayer-medic programmes and community organising work.[249] Involvement with the *lumad* was subsequently mainstreamed in the diocese through the TFA and later the Indigenous People's Apostolate (IPA). One offshoot of the community organising work of Fr. Cullen was the establishment of a federation of tribal association, or simply known as *Nagkahiusang Tribo sa Lumad sa Bukidnon* (NATRILUBU, United Tribes of Lumad in Bukidnon). This huge federation of 16 tribal associations was formalised in 1999.[250] The diocese through IPA played a key role in the formation of this *lumad* federation in Bukidnon.[251] By virtue of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) and the lobbying of NGOs and support of the Church, QUEMTRAS, a NATRILUBU member, was installed as rightful owners and occupants of their ancestral lands.

Like the case of MAPALAD, the QUEMTRAS advocacy was intended to press home the rights (including the right to development) of the *lumad* within the confines of the law. QUEMTRAS is a group of Manobo communities in Quezon municipality that sought to recover their ancestral territory which they claimed as theirs back in the 1920s.[252] Migration of lowlanders coupled with the creation and expansion of the Bukidnon Sugar Corporation

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[248] Arsenio C. Jesena, 'Social Action Center (integrated program),' in *Quinquennial Report: Prelature of Malaybalay*, Malaybalay: Prelature of Malaybalay, 1975; 42.
[249] Cullen, 'Report on the situation of the cultural minorities in the Province of Bukidnon.'
[250] Salengua interview, 13 July 2001.
[251] Ibid.
[252] LRC-CDO, 'QUEMTRAS fact sheet,' 08 March 2001.

(BUSCO) led to the displacement of the Manobos in the 1970s. In 1983, President Marcos granted Agro-Forestry Farm Lease Agreements (AFFLAs) to Silangan Investors and Management Inc., Rang-ay Farms Inc., and Escaño Hermanos Inc., which were either controlled or owned by Marcos cronies: Roberto Benedicto, Manuel Nieto Jr., and Alfredo Africa.[253] Although these firms were sequestered by the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) in 1988, they continued to operate under the administration of Pablo Lobregat, Nieto's son-in-law.[254] The cronies paid only '50 centavos per hectare a year for 25 years and renewable for the same number of years.'[255] These AFFLA areas were Manobo ancestral territories.

On August 5, 1988, DENR Secretary Factoran cancelled the AFFLAs on the bases of, first, a complaint letter from Fr. Efren M. Estaniel, parish priest of Quezon; second, the report of the Bureau of Forest Management and the Ministry of Natural Resources concerning the leased area; and third, the gross violation of the terms and conditions of AFFLA (e.g., planting sugarcane instead of tree farms) by the lessees as reported by the Ministry of Natural Resources in Region X.[256] Motions of reconsideration were repeatedly filed by the parties involved but DENR rejected their pleas. When pleas were brought to court, the Regional Trial Court (RTC) in Malaybalay issued in 1993 an order to DENR maintaining the status quo, that is, QUEMTRAS could not as yet reclaim the contested land.[257] In the meantime, dialogues, negotiations, advocacies, and mobilisations built up.

QUEMTRAS, representing four groups of Manobo tribes led by Datu Carlito Anglao, was organised in 1990. These groups were fragmented and were only united shortly before

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[253] Joey R. B. Lozano, 'Bitter fate in sugarland: Marcos cronies rule Manobo country,' Philippine Daily Inquirer reprint in its 23 and 24 September 1999 issues, 3.
[254] Ibid., 3-4.
[255] Ibid., 6.
[256] Zenia Fina C. Rendon, 'QUEMTRAS case analysis,' PAFID Mindanao and PARFUND, 1999.
[257] Ibid.

QUEMTRAS's installation on March 21, 2001.[258] Despite their differences, they became a legally recognised organisation when it was registered at the SEC on July 13, 1994.[259] The following month, it started to apply for its Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC) through the PSTFAD (Philippine Special Task Force on Ancestral Domain).[260] CADC meant legal recognition that the indigenous community petitioning for it can manage, occupy, and claim the territory as its own. At least 300 families were applicants of CADC whose original claim was more than 12,350 has. and later reduced to 2,093 has. of land by DENR.[261] There was no let up in their advocacy to obtain their CADC. The height of this advocacy was a 45-day picket by QUEMTRAS at the DENR national office and a dialogue with Cardinal Sin to influence government officials to act on their claim. On June 5, 1998, DENR granted CADC number 135 to QUEMTRAS covering 2,093 has. of land mainly the sugar plantations falling under the AFFLA areas.[262] The support groups in their advocacy in Manila included the Australian agency Community Aid Abroad (CAA), the Philippine Association for Intercultural Development (PAFID), the Partnership for Human Rights and Development (PAHRD), SAC, TFD and LRC.[263] Evidently, the Diocese of Malaybalay proved that it could be a good team player as one of the actors in this advocacy working collaboratively with the other groups.

Nonetheless, QUEMTRAS was not allowed to settle and use their claimed land since the case was put under status quo by the RTC in 1993. Negotiations and dialogues followed towards the end of 1998 until mid-1999, but to no avail.[264] The first attempt to reclaim the land was on August 10, 1999, but the members of QUEMTRAS were blocked. They stayed in the Municipal

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[258] Interview with Celso M. Manlangit, PAHRD Community Organiser (CO), Team leader of Broad Inter-alliance Support for QUEMTRAS, Quezon, Bukidnon, 29 May 2001.
[259] Rendon, 'QUEMTRAS case analysis.'
[260] Group interview with QUEMTRAS, Quezon, Bukidnon, 29 May 2001.
[261] Ibid.; Rendon, 'QUEMTRAS case analysis.'
[262] QUEMTRAS group interview, 29 May 2001; LRC-CDO, 'QUEMTRAS fact sheet.'
[263] QUEMTRAS group interview, 28 May 2001.
[264] QUEMTRAS group interview, 29 May 2001.

gym and after 15 days they again attempted to penetrate the area, but were resisted by armed men. In desperation, QUEMTRAS erected some 305 shanties and tents near the road in Silangan.[265] On December 15, 1999, they made a third attempt to reclaim their land since they were pressed by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the Municipal Mayor to vacate their shanties and tents. Armed company guards shot to death two members of QUEMTRAS. After the burial of their dead, QUEMTRAS moved to a rented settlement area provided by the Mayor.[266]

On May 3, 2000, former DENR Secretary Factoran filed a case seeking the dismissal of the civil case which maintained the status quo of the AFFLA areas. The RTC in Malaybalay dismissed the 1993 civil case on July 3, 2000 and thereby removed any legal obstacle for QUEMTRAS's reclamation of their ancestral territory. Although the occupants resisted vacating the land, through PAHRD, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the National Peace Forum (NPF), local government of Bukidnon, the Diocese of Malaybalay and Task Force QUEMTRAS, the Manobos were installed by Executive Secretary Renato de Villa along with Cabinet officials on March 14, 2001 in Silangan, Butong, Quezon.[267] President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo flew in later in the day to accept formally the installation of QUEMTRAS. In the post-installation period, the Broad Inter-alliance Support for QUEMTRAS, a coalition group, was set up precisely to address post-installation issues of the Manobo communities in Quezon. Various government and non-government agencies (e.g., Land Bank of the Philippines, NCIP, DENR, DSWD, SAC, etc) were involved in this comprehensive project to ensure a workable support system for QUEMTRAS.[268]

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[265] Ibid.
[266] LRC-CDO, 'QUEMTRAS fact sheet.'
[267] Ibid.
[268] QUEMTRAS group interview, 29 May 2001.

The local Church in Bukidnon was involved in many levels and phases of the QUEMTRAS struggle to occupy their ancestral land. The first concrete contribution was the complaint letter of Fr. Efren M. Estaniel which drew attention to the issue of the ancestral land claim of the Manobos. Another contribution was the persistent involvement of Fr. Diosdado Tabios, parish priest of Quezon, in the cause of the Manobos. Fr. Tabios sat and reflected with them in their meetings. He launched an information campaign (e.g., his homilies at Mass, meetings with parish organisations) linking the celebration of the Jubilee Year with the theme 'return of the land' for the Manobos.[269] His parish was involved in the literacy program through the Family Life Apostolate; negotiations with PAHRD which was the advocating and organising body, and with various NGOs and government agencies; and coordination of emergency and welfare operations while QUEMTRAS was not allowed to occupy their land.[270] Fr. Tabios was also instrumental as a link person between the Manobos and the NGOs, and between the people and the bishop. Bp. Pacana assured the people of the diocesan support seeing that their struggle was within the horizon of the diocesan apostolic vision.[271] He wrote a number of letters to DENR Officials and high ranking government officials and lobbied for QUEMTRAS's interests. SAC was also engaged in various levels of advocacy with other NGOs in Bukidnon and in Manila.[272] Partnership with other NGOs notably PAHRD was partly facilitated by the presence of Fr. Tabios as its board member and Fr. Cirilo Sajelan, then the parish priest of Maramag, as the board chairperson.

The Church was also involved in the installation Suminao Higa-onon Tribal Association (SUHITRA), another member of NATRILUBU, but not in the same way or extent that it did in the case of QUEMTRAS. The Church's contributions in SUHITRA were mainly seen in moral

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[269] Interview with Fr. Diosdado Tabios, Parish Priest of Nuestra Señora del Pilar, Quezon, Bukidnon, 29 May 2001.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Ibid.

and logistical support. Of notable importance were Bp. Pacana's letters of representation addressed to DENR and other government officials seeking provision for basic necessities when the natives were displaced from their land and immediately after SUHITRA's installation.[273]

5.8 The Bukidnon Church and national political issues

The Diocese of Malaybalay was involved in a host of national issues that tended to undermine democratic gains in 1986. These issues included electoral reform, attempts at changing the 1987 charter in 1997 and 1999, and the mobilisation during the Estrada crisis. In many of these cases, the Church was conscious of the plurality of actors involved in the movement. Its modes of positive interaction (mobilisation, animation and partnership) with civil society forces saw action in these national issues.

5.8.1 Electoral reform involvement

The Diocese of Malaybalay was particularly involved in the 1992 and 1998 synchronised presidential, congressional and local elections, as were many local Churches in the country. Bp. Rosales issued a pastoral letter on May 2, 1992, a week before the May 11 elections analysing the prevailing political culture and how martial law politics had ruined the nation.[274] He further exhorted the faithful to vote for just and trustworthy candidates, that is, those who represented people's aspirations for a prosperous nation, those who did not take advantage of the economy, those who were environment-friendly, and God-fearing.[275] On the issue of the environment, the bishop urged the people in this way:

> Vote the candidate that will not accede to the destruction of the environment. Vote the candidate that will not enrich oneself at the expense of wood and rattan and other products of the forest, but [vote] the one who envisions the importance linking people

[272] Manlangit interview, 29 May 2001.
[273] PARHD, 'SUHITRA: trends and developments,' Imapasug-ong: Philippine Alliance for Human Rights and Development, n.d.
[274] Gaudencio Rosales, 'Pastoral letter,' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 02 May 1992.
[275] Ibid.

and environment where it promises good life for the youth today and the coming future.[276]

It is interesting to note that environmental protection, for the first time, became an electoral issue, although the timing of the pastoral letter was late since the elections were just a week away. It was indeed an attempt to mobilise an environmental constituency for an electoral exercise. Whether or not this was actually translated into votes is another matter.

PPCRV was the diocesan electoral watch group since NASSA's VOTE-CARE came late in Bukidnon.[277] Fr. Medardo Estaniel was the provincial coordinator of PPCRV and acting provincial chairperson of NAMFREL.[278] Fr. Estaniel's leadership in both electoral watch groups eliminated possible tensions between the two, unlike in other provinces of the country. While this, no doubt, was good for PPCRV-NAMFREL partnership, in terms of lay empowerment, it was not an ideal arrangement. At any rate, some 6,000 PPCRV volunteers were recruited to assist the conduct of the elections. The *alagad* who had links with BECs were instrumental in the recruitment of the volunteers.[279] These volunteers were not limited to poll watching, but included logistical support (supply of food, communication network, transportation, etc.). The volunteers were able to cover all of the parishes in the diocese.[280] PPCRV volunteers were mainly engaged in pre-election tasks. The whole of Bukidnon was divided into three districts and each had a priest-coordinator: Central District (Fr. Medardo Estaniel), Northern District (Fr. Danilo Paciente), Southern District (Fr. Mariano Chia). As early as November 1991, preparations were underway. PPCRV sponsored two Speakers' Bureau Seminars where key

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[276] Ibid., translated from the original text in Cebuano: *Botohi ang kandidato nga wala moduyog sa pagkadaot sa atong kinaiyahan. Botohi ang kandidato nga dili mahaylo sa ganansya sa kahoy ug uway ug uban nga produkto sa kalasangan, kundili kadtong nagatan-aw sa kabililhon tali sa tawo ug kinaiyahan diin nagasaad ug maayong kinabuhi alang sa mga kabataan karon ug sa umaabot.*
[277] Estaniel interview, 18 June 2001.
[278] Ibid.
[279] Interview with Roland P. Daniot, former Pastoral Parish Council Head, Parish of San Isidro Labrador, Malaybalay, 07 May 2001.
[280] Ibid.

persons in every parish were trained to conduct voters' education seminars in their respective parishes.[281] In turn the parish leaders tapped the *alagad* to replicate voters' education seminars in the barrios.[282] PPCRV assisted NAMFREL's OQC. Before the election day, candidates signed a 'covenant' committing themselves to peaceful, honest, and clean elections. Estaniel maintains that the conduct of the elections in Bukidnon was relatively peaceful compared with other provinces.[283] The Diocese of Malaybalay was recognised by NAMFREL as one of the local Churches in the Philippines that was able to deliver 100% electoral returns for NAMFREL's OQC.[284] Since many of the NAMFREL volunteers were also members of PPCRV, it would be fair to say that both NAMFREL and PPCRV were able to monitor and tabulate electoral results in *all* of the voting precincts in the province. This also shows that both had some form of presence and involvement in *all* polling areas. Nonetheless, as were many cases in the country, post-elections political education follow up was not sustained.

In the 1995 elections, the diocese was not as involved as in the 1992 elections. In the 1998 presidential elections, the PPCRV and NAMFREL once again formed a partnership. VOTE-CARE was placed under the PPCRV network. The PPCRV operation in the 1992 elections was replicated in the 1998 elections making it easier for the organising team to revive the system they employed in the past.[285] The activities included voters' education at all levels (diocese, parish, *barrios*), recruitment of volunteers, resource mobilisation on election day, assistance to NAMFREL's OQC, coordination with COMELEC, and so on.[286] PPCRV had more logistical support on election day than they had in the 1992 elections.[287] PPCRV recruited

[281] Estaniel interview, 18 June 2001.
[282] Ibid.
[283] Ibid.
[284] Ibid.
[285] Daniot interview, 07 May 2001.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Estaniel interview, 18 June 2001.

and mobilised 5,500 volunteers.[288] The slight drop of 500 volunteers from 1992 can be explained by two factors. First, some volunteers became partisan in the 1998 elections as in many cases in the country.[289] Second, the 1998 elections, unlike the 1992 elections, were perceived to be less critical in the sense that people did not see much challenge in it compared to the 1992 elections.[290]

In the overall canvassing of votes in Bukidnon, Joseph Estrada was second to Emilio Osmeña, a rather exceptional trend where in most provinces (including those in the Visayas and Mindanao where Cebuano is spoken widely) Estrada was on top.[291] Osmeña, a native from Cebu, collected only 13.8% of the total votes cast and ranked 4th in the overall national result.[292] Church leaders in Bukidnon suspected that their voters' education (which was critical of Estrada) somehow did play a small part in this political outcome.[293] As in 1992, the 1998 synchronised national and local elections were generally peaceful. Some incidents of vote buying and *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving) were reported in the elections of 1995 and 1998, but there was hardly any election-related violence reported.[294] Indeed the local Church took the leading role in the 1998 elections. District coordinators were held by the same priests who assumed the positions in 1992 elections.

A few lessons are worth noting in the local Church's participation in the electoral exercise. First, hierarchy-laity interaction figured prominently in the 1992 and 1998 elections. This is evident in the massive participation of the *alagad* and BECs in mobilising people from

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[288] PPCRV, 'Report of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (RRCRV) to the Commission on Elections and to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the Conduct of the May 11, 1998 National and Local Elections,' 1998, 4.
[289] Estaniel interview, 18 June 2001; see also chapter four.
[290] Ibid.
[291] Osmeña was a presidential candidate of the Progressive Movement of Devolution of Initiatives (PROMDI), a political party of Central Visayas.
[292] Montinola, 'Parties and accountability in the Philippines,' 126-140.
[293] Estaniel interview, 18 June 2001.
[294] Daniot interview, 07 May 2001.

recruitment of volunteers, to voters' education and electoral watch activities. Nonetheless, there was heavy priest leadership (e.g., priests-coordinators in three PPCRV districts, and overall supervision of both PPCRV and NAMFREL),[295] which was not the case in many dioceses. Second, the Church and civil society organisations linkage as in the partnership of PPCRV and NAMFREL was equally an important one that made the involvement of the electoral watch movements more coordinated and effective. A big factor in this synergy was the able leadership of Fr. Dards Estaniel who assumed a leadership position in both groups, although this was not necessarily good practice in terms of lay empowerment. Third, an attempt to translate the environmental constituency into actual votes was initiated by the bishop in his pastoral letter, although belatedly since the elections were very close. Indeed the local Church attempted to initiate the people to an awareness of environmental citizenship, that is, making the environment an electoral agenda, but beyond the initiation was another matter.

5.8.2 Anti-charter change campaigns

The first attempt to change the 1987 constitution was during the time of President Ramos in 1997. The People's Initiative for Reforms, Modernisation and Action (PIRMA) initiative coupled with some supporters in the congress betrayed some suspicion that the President was covertly supportive of the scheme to enable him to run again for public office. The CBCP made a statement declaring that such a move betrayed 'unabashed greed for power' by proponents of the Charter change rather than a selfless motivation to serve the people's interests.[296] Bp. Pacana for his part re-echoed the sentiments raised by the CBCP is his pastoral letter:

> I ask that our people pray and discern as to what course of action to take. If after a process of discernment, they agree with the stand of the CBCP or the diocese, let them

[295] PPCRV, 'Report of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV)....,' 1998, 3-4.
[296] 'Addiction to power is the real issue behind Charter change moves – CBCP,' *The CBCP Monitor* I(17) (1997), 12.

come out and be counted and make public their protest against any move towards Constitutional changes.[297]

Bp. Pacana was keenly sensitive not to impose his views on the faithful. Thus he invited the people to make their own considered judgment and if it was in line with that of CBCP, then they should go public about their sentiments. The main thrust of the diocesan campaign against Charter change was information dissemination through radio DXDB, homilies at Mass, BEC discussion, and other public forum.[298] Signature campaign and rallies were held in various parishes in the diocese.[299] The culmination of the campaign was the mobilisation of the people in the public plaza of Malaybalay City. Civil society organisations and the Church led the mobilisation of some 1,000 people in the rally.[300]

The second attempt to tamper with the 1987 charter was during the time of President Estrada in 1999. Again a similar campaign was launched. After the CBCP position was known, the diocese also came out with its own supporting the stand of the latter. This information campaign was similar to the first one, viz., the use of the DXDB radio station, BEC discussion, pastoral letter, homilies at Mass. A signature campaign was launched and rallies were conducted in various parishes apart from Malaybalay.[301] Students from San Isidro College, a diocesan school in Malaybalay, joined the two thousand protesters in the public plaza.[302]

5.8.3 Mobilisation during the Estrada crisis

The movement to oust Estrada was a complex phenomenon (see Chapter Four). While it proved that the plurality of forces in Philippine society was vibrant, the failure of the Senate to address

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[297] Bp. Honesto Ch. Pacana, SJ, 'Pastoral letter on charter change,' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 10 September 1997.
[298] Interview with Nestor N. Villanueva, Social Action Center staff, Diocese of Malaybalay, Malaybalay, 31 July 2001.
[299] Ibid.
[300] Saburao interview, 22 May 2001.
[301] Villanueva interview, 31 July 2001.
[302] Saburao interview, 22 May 2001.

the issue, the fragmentation of the elite and masses, the class divide that typified the pro-Estrada and anti-Estrada groups, all these revealed the limits of democratisation in the Philippines. Interestingly, unlike in Manila and other provinces, in Bukidnon, the pro-Estrada groups were not able to mobilise and the local Church, in general, was solidly behind the anti-Estrada campaign. Like many places in the country, the movement to force President Estrada either to resign, face impeachment or be ousted was gaining in its momentum in Bukidnon in October 2000 following the exposé of *jueteng* scandal by Governor Luis 'Chavit' Singson. A broad multi-sectoral group, People's Alliance to Remove Erap (PARE-Bukidnon) was convened. Fr. Jun Balansag was one of the convenors of PARE-Bukidnon and the bishop's link person to civil society. It issued a strong statement on October 22, 2000 calling for the resignation of the president, 11 days after Cardinal Sin and the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Manila made a categorical pronouncement that President Estrada has lost 'moral ascendancy to govern.'[303] PARE-Bukidnon's clamour was further strengthened by the Church when on Octber 25, 2000 Bp. Pacana echoing the pastoral letters of Cardinal Sin and the CBCP, called for the resignation of President Estrada 'as soon as possible to forestall further disarray in the country.'[304] A huge multi-sectoral protest rally was organised in Malaybalay on December 17, 2000. Approximately 25,000 people joined the Estrada Resign Movement rally in Rizal Plaza.[305] Then Vice-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, former House Speaker Manuel Villar and Batangas House Representative Ralph Recto were among the guests. Lakas-NUCD local politicians led by former House Representative José R. Zubiri mobilised local officials and their supporters from 17 municipalities and 2 cities of Bukidnon.[306] At this rally, Vic Abrogueña,

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[303] Jaime Cardinal Sin, 'On the way of truth. A Pastoral statement of the Presbyteral Council of the Archidiocese of Manila,' 11 October 2000.
[304] Bp. Honesto Ch. Pacana, 'Pastoral letter,' Malaybalay: Diocese of Malaybalay, 25 October 2000.
[305] Pete Maguale, '25,000 attend anti-Erap rally,' *Central Mindanao Newswatch Daily*, 1st week of November 2000, 1.
[306] Ibid.

provincial chairperson of 'JEEP ni Erap', announced his resignation as its head and declared his intention to join the campaign to press for his ouster.[307] The support and leadership of the Church was quite visible notwithstanding some anxieties of church leaders that the mobilisation could be used by the *politicos* for their own interests.[308] Bp. Pacana gave a solidarity message. The UCCP minister Pastor Arturo Villadiez delivered mainline Protestants' solidarity statement.

The gathering at Rizal Plaza was the biggest political protest assembly in the history of Bukidnon. The local Church with civil society actors and local government officials were key actors in this political mobilisation. Like the mobilisations in the two anti-charter change campaigns, the Church more than ever became conscious of its supportive role by enabling civil society actors including PEACE and PARE-Bukidnon to organise, mobilise and educate the people regarding the issues affecting the life of the nation.

5.9 Conclusion

The Diocese of Malaybalay case demonstrates several key lessons for an understanding of the local Church's roles in building democracy. The first lesson pertains to the interaction between its leadership (bishops and clergy in particular) and membership (e.g., BECs, lay organisations). Given the different approaches and doctrinal tendencies within its leadership and the variety of BECs (liberational, developmental and liturgical) and lay groups (charismatic and traditional organisations), consensus building through constant negotiation and deliberation was essential. Traditional organisations (e.g., KoC) were generally resistant to social transformation whereas as the BECs were the main proponents of a participatory church. The Church leadership dealt extensively with the BECs (particularly those that stressed the development and liberational

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[307] PARE-Bukidnon, 'December 17 Bukidnon anti-Erap rally successful,' Malaybalay, n.d. 'JEEP (Justice, Economy, Environment and Peace) ni Erap' was an electoral campaign vehicle of President Estrada. It remained active as a tool of information and as a political machinery for during his incumbency.
[308] Ibid.

approaches) much more than the traditional and charismatic groups. Thus the constant interaction between the two bodies is not only desirable but necessary to reduce internal contradictions and increase the local Church's internal mechanism of participation. This enhanced the local Church's potency in constructing and deepening democracy. In this way, the local Church was not simply the hierarchical leadership alone nor the lay people (as organised communities, BECs, or organisations) by themselves as some writers in the literature would imply,[309] but the constant intercommunication between and within the two entities through formal and informal mechanisms of consultation, deliberation, and participation. The dynamic interaction between the two had tremendous influence within many of its mobilisation and advocacy campaigns: forest protection in San Fernando Bukidnon leading to the total log ban of the province; environmental protection from Wao to Malaybalay; commitment to human rights including agrarian collective rights and indigenous peoples' rights leading to the installation of QUEMTRAS and SUHITRA; national issues crucial to democratisation such as the national and local elections, anti-charter campaigns, and the movement to press President Estrada either to resign, be impeached or ousted. Unlike the experiences of many progressive dioceses in Latin America where the hierarchy and BECs drifted to nearly political inactivity in the post-authoritarian period (see Chapter Two), the Diocese of Malaybalay continued to struggle with some modest success in democracy building.

Some factors facilitated hierarchy-laity interaction in Bukidnon. Firstly, the role and vision of the three bishops, that is, Claver, Rosales and Pacana, made possible a continuity in the diocesan apostolic vision and pastoral strategy. Their appointments seem to be an exception to the general tendency of the Vatican leadership to rein in political activities of the universal

[309] Gill, *Rendering unto Caesar...*; Lehmann, *Democracy and development in Latin America...*; Haynes, *Religion in third world politics....*

Church.[310] While these bishops had differing emphases, their core ecclesial themes remained constant: hierarchy-laity communion, lay participation, and building of BECs. Claver laid the foundations of the Church's initiatives in building democracy (lay participation, *kapilya*-based BCCs, promotion of social justice and social transformation). Rosales injected spiritual formation and initiated environmental citizenship. Pacana pushed for more institutionalisation and participation of BECs. Underpinning all these was the 'people of God' ecclesiological project of Vatican II. In the experience of some Latin American countries, the appointment of conservative prelates was evident in the local and supra-national ecclesiastical units creating some internal tensions.[311] In Bukidnon, the two bishops who succeeded Bp. Claver, although moderates in many respects, were definitely not prepared to retreat from the public sphere. Bishops Rosales and Pacana followed through the vision set by their predecessor Bp. Claver.

Secondly, the involvement of parish priests like Fr. Kelly in San Fernando, Fr. Tabios in QUEMTRAS's installation, Fr. Almedilla with SAC leader Edna Espinosa in Wao proved vital in maintaining that link between the bishop and the organised lay communities. They also served as an important connection to the parish and diocese at large, and to various provincial and national NGOs. They were not simply activists but more importantly crucial animators in the local community. In the case of the MAPALAD farmers, however, this was the missing link in their advocacy. Fr. Ares, the farmers' parish priest, and the *alagad*, were opposed to their cause. This, together with the cracks within the national church leadership, weakened the Church's advocacy on local and national levels.

Thirdly, the BECs provided important enabling structures that mainstreamed lay participation and democratised the local Church. Post-authoritarian bishops Rosales and Pacana

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[310] See Cleary and Stewart-Gambino, *Conflict and competition...*; Daudelin and Hewitt, 'Church and politics in Latin America.' Swatos, *Religion and democracy in Latin America.*

[311] Mainwaring, 'Democratization, socioeconomic disintegration, and the Latin American Churches after Puebla.'

were singularly devoted to the proliferation and development of BECs, unlike many of their local counterparts in Brazil, El Salvador, Peru, Chile, and others.[312] In the Archdiocese of São Paulo, Brazil, for instance, W. E. Hewitt explains that part of the deactivation of CEBs was due to lack of hierarchical support in the post-transition period.[313] Nonetheless, the Bukidnon Church continued to earn auspicious backing from the hierarchical leadership particularly the bishops.[314]

The second lesson relates to the Church's readiness to interact (mobilise, animate, create partnership) with a young civil society in Bukidnon. This interaction was most pronounced in environmental advocacy, commitment to human rights specifically those which relate to collective and indigenous rights, electoral reform participation, and various national issues impinging on democracy. The partnership with civil society involved actors from the local to national and international civil society organisations. This partnership was enhanced by a number of factors. Firstly, the weaknesses of political institutions and the government and quasi-government agencies created serious flaws in the bureaucracy that led to a crisis of public confidence in the very building blocs or political institutions on which democracy depended. In the case of the environment issue, government officials, law enforcers, DENR (both PENRO and CENRO), legislative body and so on were ineffective in curbing illegal logging. A similar lack of enforcement of political institutions is evident in the case of the protection of human rights, advancement of IP and agrarian reform issues even when these found places of cardinal importance in the 1987 Constitution. Secondly, some priests took on key leadership positions in these civil society groups (e.g., Fr. M. Estaniel in NAMFREL, Fr. Balansag in PARE-Bukidnon,

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[312] Hewitt, 'Religion and the consolidation of democracy in Brazil...; Cavendish, Christian base communities and the building of democracy.... Claver interview, 13 January 2001.
[313] Other factors include the internal conflict between the conservatives and the progressives, the institutionalisation of BECs, and the democratic climate in Brazil. Hewitt, 'Religion and the consolidation of democracy in Brazil...,' 54-55.
[314] Claver interview, 13 January 2001.

Fr. Tabios in PAHRD). Although PPCRV was heavily led by clerics in the 1992 and 1998 elections (not desirable in terms of lay empowerment) this facilitated a positive interaction between church groups and independent civil society organisations. Thirdly, the Church and civil society actors shared concerns in dealing with issues affecting democracy such as those which relate to the environment and the indigenous peoples. These issues provided a focus on the trajectory of church involvement in the post-authoritarian period, a scenario that many BECs in post-transition Brazil and Chile did not encounter because of withdrawal of hierarchical support and the lack of focused a agenda.[315]

Fourthly, the bishops of Bukidnon, particularly Bp. Pacana, were more than ever conscious of the rightful space that civil society agents have in democracy building. The Church was clearly disposed to such partnership by taking on a supportive role, although it still had tremendous influence in their involvement and at times it tended to take the leading role. Fifthly, many young civil society organisations in Bukidnon were either strongly influenced by the Church or they saw the Church as a potential ally in strengthening democracy. COPE, SCAPS, PEACE, Lihok-Wao, PAHRD, PARE-Bukidnon and others had priests or lay leaders who were actively involved in their operations so that the partnership with the Church came naturally.

The third lesson concerns the Church's contribution to the initiation of citizenship in the locality. A first variant of citizenship revolves around environmental rights, the most important contribution of the Diocese of Malaybalay in post-transition democracy building. Environmental citizenship is a growing interest in the literature on democratic and development studies.[316] The Diocese of Kidapawan likewise tried to form an environmental constituency along with the protest movement against the construction of geothermal project in Mount Apo in Mindanao, but

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[315] Cavendish, 'Christian base communities and the building of democracy,' 88.
[316] See Jeff Haynes, 'Power, politics and environmental movements in the third world,' *Environmental Politics*, 8(1), (Spring 1999), 222-242; Hartley Dean, 'Green citizenship,' *Social Policy and Administration*, 35(5), (2001), 490-505.

the priests who represented the religious establishment were perceived as divisive and troublemakers by the people of Sabayan (an Obo-Manobo village).[317] Thus the environmental constituency did not prosper in ways that happened in Bukidnon. The beginnings of environmental citizenship can be traced back to the San Fernando advocacy. The local Church in Bukidnon was shaping knowingly or unknowingly an environmental constituency who would have active participants in environmental policies, advocacies, and practices in the province and in the national sphere. Although the deputisation of priests was not ideal in strengthening political establishments in the long run, it had an immediate effect of curbing logging of trees and projected the seriousness of environmental degradation that the province was threatened with. Environmental citizenship was an outcome not simply of the issues that presented themselves but because of the environmental education in the BECs, ecology-focused spirituality (although this mainly assumed a Catholic form), pastoral exhortation of the bishop and priests who acted as foresters, and the death of Fr. Satur who offered his life for the cause of environmental protection. The CBCP, MSPC, and AMRSP elevated the issue beyond the province by issuing statements in support of the protest movement.

Evidently, the narrative of environmental engagement in Bukidnon veered away from Lela Garner Noble's understanding of environmental activism in the Philippines where 'activists perceive that damage to the environment is resulting in intolerable or disproportional costs, so that stopping its causes – whatever their benefits – is better than suffering their consequences.'[318] The Bukidnon experience had multidimensional motivations for waging their environmental struggle apart from the threat of environmental degradation. It was informed by Vatican II, PCP

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[317] Albert Alejo, *Generating energies in Mount Apo: cultural politics in a contested environment* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2001), 44-79.
[318] Lela Garner Noble, 'Environmental activism,' in *NGOs, civil society, and the Philippine state: organizing for democracy*, eds. G. Sidney Silliman and Lela Garner (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998), 212-213.

II, and ecology-centred education and spiritual sessions. The statements of CBCP, MSPC, and AMRSP affirmed that the struggle in Bukidnon was within the Church's mission.

As part of environmental citizenship, the local Church attempted to make environmental issues part of the electoral agenda in 1992 in Bukidnon. Whether or not they were able to translate this concern into actual votes is debatable. The struggle to have a total log ban imposed on the province of Bukidnon is a clear indication that the people were not simply inhabitants of the land, but truly citizens who exercised their rights in the care and protection of the environment. Subsequently any attempt to degrade the environment such as the harvesting of pine trees in Malaybalay and the felling of trees in Wao were met by instantaneous opposition by the Church and civil society actors. This case argues strongly that BECs do instill a political culture that is compatible with engaged citizenship. This confirms Hewitt's insight of CEBs in speaking of their political contributions in the São Paulo Archdiocese in Brazil: these potentially 'create a citizenry more acutely aware of its political rights and duties.'[319] Nonetheless, what appears to be a challenge for the Church and civil society actors is how to shift from environmental citizenship (mainly on advocacy) to competent citizenship (including skills, informed interventions, programme management). The shift from being environmental users to shapers in social policy is extremely crucial and often a road less travelled by citizens.[320] The failure, for instance, of San Fernando's KPPSK in an attempt to shift from protest to participation is one such example. Thus far local Church's advocacy largely hinges on a rights-based approach to environmental protection and may need to be more proactive and effective in practicing citizenship in everyday life. Still, if one were to follow the belief that in the

[319] Hewitt, 'Religion and the consolidation of democracy in Brazil...., 46.
[320] Cornwall and Gaventa, 'From users and choosers to makers and shapers...;' Elizabeth Jelin, 'Citizenship revisited: solidarity, responsibility, and rights,' in *Constructing democracy: human rights, citizenship, and society in Latin America*, eds Elizabeth Jelin and Eric Hershberg (Boulder, Colorado and Oxford: Westerview Press Inc., 1996), 106-107.

experiences of environmental groups in the developing world 'failures outweigh successes,' the Bukidnon case deserves the accolade like the Indian Chipko movement.[321]

A second variant of engaged citizenship is evident in the diocese's attempts to restore confidence in the rule of law and the judicial system through its legal aid programmes. Since the early 1970s, the diocese has a fairly long tradition and practice of ensuring that the poor become aware of their rights and have access to legal aid. Para-legal training of COs, BEC members, human rights awareness and advocacy, legal representation in courts, and the like were attempts to restore confidence in the rule of law and the judicial system, although the legal framework did not always protect fundamental rights. The Church's commitment to human rights allowed the Church to widen its engagement with non-state entities (e.g. occupants of ancestral domains) as human rights violators, not only the State and its agencies. Restoring confidence in the rule of law was also evident in the diocese's mobilisation to oppose the two attempts to change the 1987 Charter, particularly Ramos' cha-cha.

A third variant of citizenship is the broadening of the concept of individual human rights to include the collective rights of MAPALAD farmers (e.g., implementation of agrarian reform) and those (e.g., right to development) of the indigenous people. This level of mobilisation and lobbying for collective rights can be gleaned from the local Church's initiation of environmental citizenship in San Fernando and later in Wao. The people, not simply as individuals, had a collective right to protect the environment from further degradation. While theorists have often argued the primacy of law in a democratic polity, too often universal rights, whether civil, cultural, economic, political or social, have been constructed for individuals and not for a collective body as in indigenous peoples.[322] The local Church's insistence that the MAPALAD

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[321] Haynes, 'Power, politics and environmental movements in the third world,' 223.
[322] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, 'Indigenous rights: some conceptual problems,' in *Constructing democracy: human rights, citizenship, and society in Latin America*, eds Elizabeth Jelin and Eric Hershberg, (Boulder, Colorado and Oxford: Westerview Press, Inc., 1996), 141-159.

farmers be treated as collective beneficiaries of the agrarian reform programme and that QUEMTRAS and SUHITRA be awarded their ancestral claims and subsequently installed in their proper domains shows its commitment to the promotion of their collective and indigenous rights as provided for by the Philippine law. Applying citizenship to indigenous peoples is increasingly a topical domain in current literature as others have shown.[323] The local Churches in Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala and Mexico were part of the network of alliances that participated in shaping a form of citizenship compatible with indigenous movements.[324]

Finally, a fourth variant of citizenship pertains to the local Church's political education and electoral reform involvement during the elections of 1992 and 1998. This reinforced public confidence in the electoral system, a necessary condition for any democracy to operate. Although there were still reports of *dagdag-bawas* in the 1998 elections, Bukidnon was one of the most peaceful among the electoral areas. The fact that it delivered 100% electoral returns of its OQC meant that practically all the voting places were covered by PPCRV and NAMFREL. Once again the *alagad* and BECs were important players in this electoral enterprise. Nonetheless, one main problem, as in most, if not all, of the political education campaigns of PPCRV and VOTE-CARE, was the lack of follow up in the post-election period.

These variants of citizenship (articulation and representation of environmental rights, restoring confidence in the primacy of law, human rights, electoral reform, see Chapter One) are some of the crucial building blocs of democratisation in the Philippine context. The Bukidnon experience shows a vibrant citizenship, partly due to the role of the Catholic Church and the civil society protagonists. Sustaining the momentum of this citizenship is another thing. In addition, engaged citizenship requires a strong local and national state to produce a more profound impact on democratisation.

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[323] Ibid., See also Yashar, 'Contesting citizenship in indigenous movements and democracy in Latin America.'
[324] Ibid.

Chapter Six

The Diocese of Bacolod: a tale of democratic engagement or disengagement?

> 'To everyone of good will, do not be afraid and take a chance on peace. Our longing for genuine and lasting peace we believe is not a disappointment by our apparent failure. We will continue to cry to high heavens to pray: *Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.* At the same time, we will work for peace in the manner of a courageous and united action.' --Bishop Antonio Y. Fortich[1]

Perhaps no other local Church in the Philippines, the Archdiocese of Manila excepting, has received as much national and international attention as the Diocese of Bacolod in Negros Occidental. While some have attempted to describe and explain the struggles of the Diocese of Bacolod against political repression, all of these story lines either touch upon the time of Marcos or scantily cover the post-authoritarian period.[2] Following the main direction of this study, three arguments are adduced in this chapter. Firstly, the strengths or weaknesses of the Diocese of Bacolod in constructing post-authoritarian democracy swivel around the axis of hierarchy-laity interaction (church *ad intra*). When operative, this linkage induces and consolidates people's participation. Secondly, the potency of the Church as an actor in democratisation significantly hinges on its connection with civil society (church *ad extra*). These two linkages enhance the efficacy of political outcomes of the Church as an actor. Like the Diocese of Malaybalay, much of its capacity to create and sustain democratic gains depends to a large extent on these terms. Thirdly, despite the growing internal rifts that racked the local Church, the Diocese of Bacolod's most significant contribution to democracy building was its role in forming a constituency anchored on peace and social justice. Thus an engaged citizenship with a peace agenda emerged amid armed conflict in the province.

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[1] Antonio Y. Fortich, 'No to violence: a pastoral letter on the civilians' rights to live and freedom,' Diocese of Bacolod, 07 September 1987.

[2] See Alfred McCoy, *Priests on trial: Father Gore and Father O'Brien caught in the crossfire between dictatorship and revolution* (Victoria: The Dominion Press – Hedges and Bell, Penguin Books, 1984); Niall O'Brien, *Revolution from the heart* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1992); Niall O'Brien, *Island of tears, island of hope: living the Gospel in a revolutionary situation.* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1994); Violeta B. Lopez-Gonzaga, *The Negrense: a social history of an elite class* (Bacolod City: University of St. La Salle, Institute for Social Research and Development, 1991).

This chapter is divided into five main sections: a brief historical sketch of the Diocese of Bacolod, an examination of the factors that affected the local Church's roles during the authoritarian period, an investigation of the transition within the diocese, a description and analysis of the main lines of engagement (or dis-engagement) of the diocese, and a conclusion. When appropriate, a comparison between the Diocese of Bacolod and the Diocese of Malaybalay will be made.

The Diocese of Bacolod in many ways shares with the struggle of the Diocese of Malaybalay, yet in other respects, it is quite different. The Diocese of Bacolod was the first to be radicalised in the Visayas region and one of the most progressively involved local Churches in the Philippines during the Marcos period. Like Malaybalay diocese, it was one of the first local Churches to challenge the authoritarian State after the imposition of martial law in 1972. Among the local Churches in the Philippines, its political trajectory is probably the closest to the experience of many of the Latin American dioceses beyond the authoritarian period.

6.1 Origins: people and the Catholic Church

Negros, a boot-shaped island, is in the western part of the Visayas. The early Spanish explorers named the whole island 'Isla de los Negros' (Land of the Negroes) owing to the presence of the short and black natives called 'Negritos.'[3] Unlike Bukidnon whose ethnic population constitutes about 20% of its population up until the 1970s, the Negritos have largely disappeared as a distinct ethnic populace in Negros,. Some isolated remnants in the mountainous areas of the island remain. Most of them have been assimilated, by force or inducement, by the more dominant and pervasive Negrense culture, a product of intermarriages with various nationalities.[4]

[3] Lopez-Gonzaga, *The Negrense..*, 3 & 8.
[4] Ibid., chapters one and two.

As early as 1734, Negros was a military district with Ilog as its first capital. Later the capital moved to Himamaylan and finally to Bacolod in 1849.[5] Rapid influx of migration from nearby provinces such as Antique, Capiz, Cebu and Iloilo began in 1855 when Negros gradually transformed itself into a monocrop sugarland regime and paved the way for its entrance into the global economy.[6] By 1865, Negros became a 'politico-military province.'[7] Population growth was on the rise in Negros accompanied by rapid capitalist expansion. In 1890, Negros Occidental became a distinct province from Negros Oriental (facing Cebu).[8] Negros Occidental was constituted politically as a province much earlier than Bukidnon whose provincial status emerged in 1907 and whose migrants started to populate the area only in the 1950s. Negros Occidental covers a total land area of 7,926,607 hectares.[9] Seventy-eight percent of its population of 2,434,186 speak Hiligaynon or Ilonggo and some 21% use Cebuano.[10]

Initial evangelisation of Negros was led by the Agustinians in early 1556,[11] although a few contacts happened between the Spanish *conquistadores* and natives before that.[12] The Recollect Fathers along with the secular clergy pursued the task of evangelisation from 1606 until 1638 when it was taken over by the Jesuits. [13] The Jesuits remained in Negros until 1769, when their suppression as a religious order reached the island.[14] With the expulsion of the Jesuits, the Domincans took over while waiting for the coming of the diocesan clergy. [15] The secular clergy administered the island until 1848 when the Recollect Fathers took charge of

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[5] Provincial Planning and Development Office – Negros Occidental (PPDO-NO), 'Socio-economic profile: Province of Negros Occidental,' Bacolod City, 1998, 1.
[6] Lopez-Gonzaga, *The Negrense...*, 14-19.
[7] PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile..., 1998, 1.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid., 3.
[10] Ibid., 7,
[11] *Quinquennial Report*, Bacolod: Diocese of Bacolod, 1985-1989, 53.
[12] Modesto P. Sa-onoy, *A Brief history of the Church in Negros Occidental* (Bacolod City: Bacolod Publishing House, 1976), 9-13.
[13] *Quinquennial Report*, 1985-1989, 53
[14] Sa-onoy, *A brief history of the Church in Negros Occidental*, 19.
[15] Ibid.; Sa-onoy, *A Brief history of the Church in Negros Occidental*, 19-23.

Negros.[16] From 1865, Negros Island was part of the Diocese of Jaro until the creation of the Diocese of Bacolod on July 15, 1932.[17] Bp. Casimiro M. Lladoc served as the first bishop of the diocese from June 23, 1933 until his death in 1951.[18] Bp. Manuel Yap, a well-known Scripture scholar, succeeded him on May 29, 1952. Three years later, the Diocese of Dumaguete was created covering the whole province of Negros Oriental while the Diocese of Bacolod encompassed Negros Occidental. Bp. Yap died in 1966, a year after Vatican II was convened.[19] The following year, Bp. Antonio Y. Fortich was installed as the resident bishop of the diocese.

In 1987, the diocese was partitioned into three local Churches: the Diocese of San Carlos (Northeast), the Diocese of Kabankalan (South), and the Diocese of Bacolod in the middle (see Figure 6 next page). By all indications then, the Diocese of Bacolod is much older than the Diocese of Malaybalay whose emergence as an autonomous local Church only started in 1969. Traditional groups and religious practices are more deeply entrenched in the Bacolod diocese compared with the Malaybalay diocese. Nonetheless, massive poverty and oppressive labour conditions made the area a fertile ground for political activism. Like the Diocese of Malaybalay, Roman Catholicism has the biggest religious adherents consisting of 87% of its population.[20] From 1918 to 1948, the Aglipayans (Philippine Independent Church, PIC) declined considerably losing some 23.3% of its membership.[21] By the 1980s, PIC claimed only 5.30% of the province's population.[22] The Catholic Church leadership in Negros Occidental, with few exceptions since the time of the conquest, has not only been identified with the wealthy landowners but benefited from its alliance with the landed gentry.[23]

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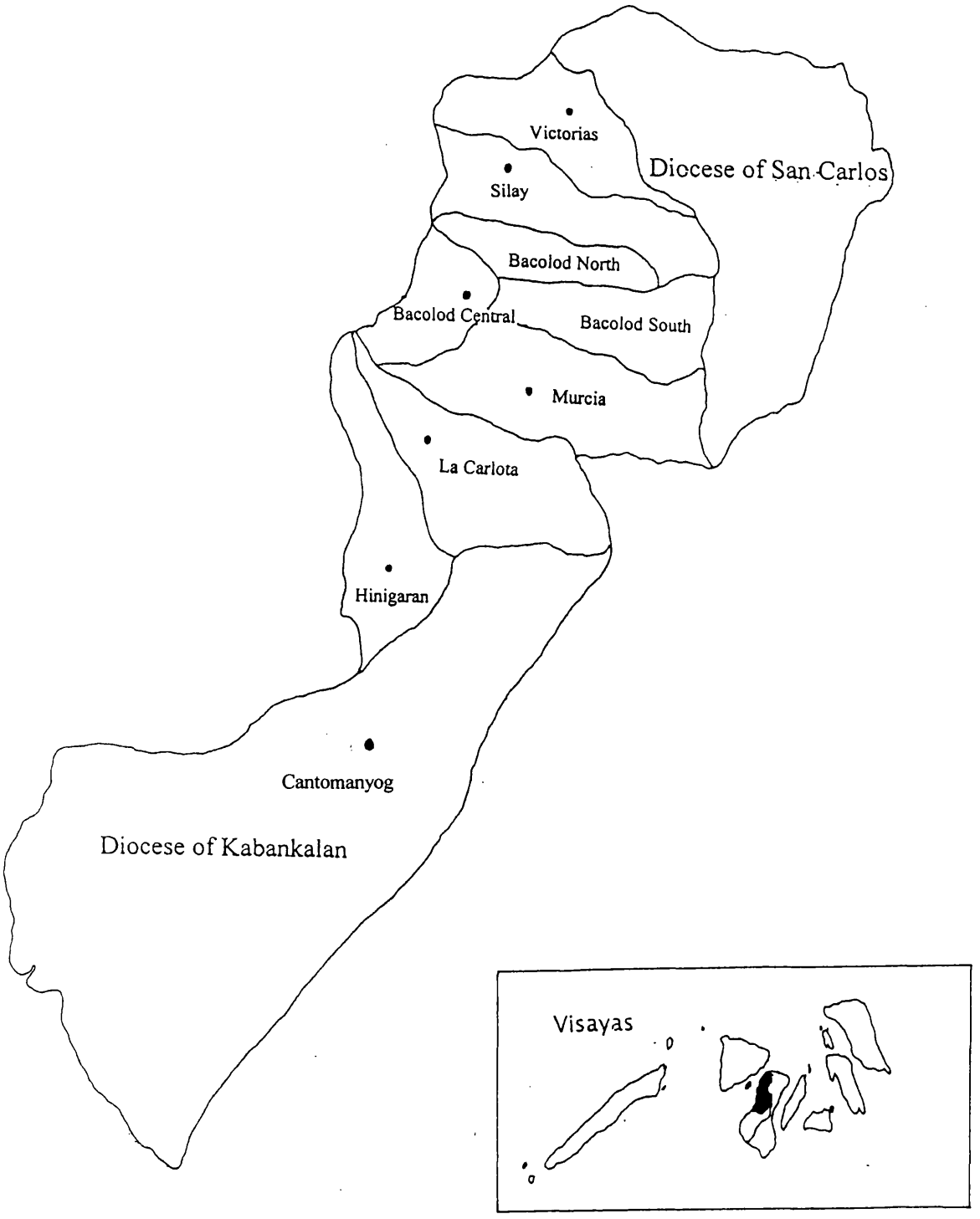
[16] Ibid.
[17] *Quinquennial Report*, 1985-1989, 53.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile..., 1998, 7.
[21] Sa-onoy, *A Brief history of the Church in Negros Occidental*, 95-96.
[22] PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile..., 1988, 12
[23] Lopez-Gonzaga, *The Negrense*....

Figure 6: Ecclesiastical map of the Diocese of Bacolod



Source: *2000 Directory of the Philippines* (Quezon City: CBCP and Claretian Publications, 2000), 8-13. Map drawn by Jerry P. Masayon with the assistance of Ernesto C. Tajones, August 2001.

6.2 Conditions that shaped the local Church's roles during the authoritarian period

A number of factors led to the radicalisation of the Negros Occidental Church. These factors involved the reforms set out by Vatican II, the progressive deterioration of the socio-political and economic situation in Negros during the years of dictatorship, the ascendancy of Bp. Antonio Y. Fortich as the third Bishop of the Diocese Bacolod, the rise of BCCs, and finally the influence of the revolutionary Left.

6.2.1 Vatican II reforms: church renewal begins

Vatican II was followed by a vital papal social encyclical *Populorum Progressio* which insisted that genuine international development requires social justice.[24] *Populorum Progressio* further gave impetus to the National Rural Congress, a Vatican-sponsored program intended to realise the aspirations enshrined in the papal encyclical. For both Malaybalay and Bacolod dioceses, the National Rural Congress was a crucial point of departure in the Church's public involvement. Bp. Fortich established the Social Action Committee which in turn organised the National Rural Congress in September 1967 in Bacolod City.[25] It was held a year ahead of the Latin American Medellin Conference indicating that the reforms in the Diocese of Bacolod were relatively ahead of the times. Rome sent a prelate to act as its representative. Bishop Mariano G. Gaviola was sent by Julio Cardinal Santos from the Archdiocese of Manila to represent him.[26] The Rural Congress was a critical watershed in the life of the diocese since at this juncture the local Church decided to turn its gaze to social issues and sought ways to alleviate the lives of the poor.[27] In the congress, resolutions were fashioned and intended to push for social reform in line with

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[24] Pope Paul VI, *Populorum progressio* (On the development of peoples) available from http://www.osjspm.org/cst/pp.htm, 27 March 2003.
[25] Interview with Fr. Ireneo R. Gordoncillo, Former Social Action Center Director, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod, 06 April 2001.
[26] O'Brien, *Island of tears, island of hope...*, 38.
[27] Interview with Fr. Niall O'Brien, Columban missionary in the Diocese of Bacolod, Navan, Ireland, 16 July 2002.

Populorum Progressio. Inevitably, the congress raised the expectations of the participants. Various programs and initiatives arose directly or indirectly in the wake of the Rural Congress: land transfer of agricultural church lands in Himamaylan; the creation of the Social Action Center (SAC) which was headed by Fr. Luis Jalandoni; establishment of Dacongcogon Sugar and Rice Milling Cooperative, Rice and Corn Cooperative, *Kaisahan* (United) Farm Settlement Cooperative in Candoni; setting up of a cottage industry of cheap clothes for workers (Rainbow Sewing Foundation); launching of TV and radio stations; the emergence of Khi Rho, a movement of Christian students; formation of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) through Fr. Edgar S. A. Saguinsin and Jesuit Fr. Hector Mauri after initial attempts to organise the labourers through the Federation of Free Workers (FFF) failed; the erection of the diocesan Legal Aid Office; Labour Union Education Project, credit unions; and the issuing of a pastoral letter safeguarding the rights of the workers.[28] These initiatives were initially developmental in that they were aimed at socio-economic welfare of the people. Over time, however, some of these programmes bore a more political content and purpose.

6.2.2 Socio-political and economic context

The province of Negros Occidental is known as the sugarland of the Philippines. Since it became part of a global enterprise in the mid-nineteenth century, it has maintained a semi-feudal agrarian structure in a generally monocrop economy and largely it remains so to date. From 1950s to 1980s, the province yielded an annual produce of some 60% of the nation's sugar output.[29] In 1990, 180,984 hectares were given to the production of sugarcane which yielded 55% of its total crop production.[30] The boom and bust of the sugar industry depended in good

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[28] Ibid., 40; 'Primer: Basic Christian Community (Community Organizing),' Diocese of Bacolod, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Bacolod, November 1989.
[29] PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile..., 1998, 2.
[30] PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile...., 1991, 56; PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile..., 1988, 56

measure on the international price of sugar and the local cartelisation of sugar production. The sharp decline of the global price of sugar in 1984 and 1985 coupled with the cartelisation of the industry through the National Sugar Trading Corporation (NASUTRA) and Philippine Sugar Commission (PHILSUCOM) under Roberto S. Benedicto, a known Marcos crony, caused severe starvation and malnutrition in the province.[31] The United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), at the time of the sugar crisis, claimed that 82% of the children in Negros were malnourished.[32]

Labour relations were acutely biased against the sugarcane labourers, both the *dumaans* (old inhabitants) and the *sacadas* (migrant workers from Antique). The former were settled and part of the parish life, having attached themselves as peasants working in the farm, while the latter were transient farmers working only on the basis of their contracts with the *contratistas* (recruiting agents) of haciendas. In 1976, the peak of *sacada* inflows and sugar boom during that decade, around 0.9% of the province's population, that is, 16,255 *sacada* workers reportedly joined the workforce, but the figure has steadily declined.[33] In 1986, *sacada* inflows registered a low 0.16% of its populace, that is, 3,528 workers.[34]

The exposé of Jesuit scholastic Arsenio Jesena in 1969, describes poignantly the dehumanising condition of the sugarcane workers. Reflecting on his experience as a *sacada* worker in Negros he wrote: 'I saw the injustice of it all, and I began to understand why the Communists are Communists.'[35] He asked the *sacadas* if they would join the Communists if they come and their answer to the question was, 'Yes.'[36] Translated in four international languages and appeared in leading newspapers in Australia, Europe and the United States, this

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[31] Lopez-Gonzaga, *The Negrense...*, 98-103.
[32] *Economist*, 'Oh, for the old Cadillac days,' 343(8021) (14 June 1997), 45.
[33] PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile..., 1998, 9.
[34] Ibid.
[35] J.J. Jesena, 'The Sacadas of Sugarland,' in *Yapee 2* (Quezon City: Sterling Points, 2000), 152.
[36] Ibid., 153.

report accentuating the systemic exploitation of workers gained national and international publicity.[37] This drew down the ire of the *hacenderos* and planters. The exposé grabbed the attention of the local Church. The *sacadas* in due course became an icon of exploitation in Negros.[38]

The agricultural sector holds the bulk of the workforce with roughly 54% of the population deriving income from agricultural employment, 11% less than that of Bukidnon.[39] Like Bukidnon, landholding is limited to a few. Some 3.8% of the landed class own and control 72.4% of the total landholdings.[40] The unemployment rate from 1986 to 1995 ranged from 5.2% to 10%.[41] Given its heavy dependence on seasonal agricultural employment, particularly sugar planting and harvesting, underemployment posed a chronic problem.

Acute unfair agrarian relations did not escape Pope John Paul II's notice when he visited Negros in 1981. He argued in his speech that agrarian relations must be anchored on justice and fair distribution of the fruits of the land:

> Because the land is a gift of God for the benefit of all, it is not admissible to use this gift in such a manner that the benefits it produces serve only a limited number of people. It is not admissible that in the general development process of a nation there should continue to exist the injustice whereby progress worthy of man does not reach precisely those people who live in the rural areas, who in sweat and toil make the land productive, and who must rely on the work of their hands for the sustenance of their family.[42]

The message took a swipe at the wealthy *hacenderos* and planters who could do something to address injustice done to workers. In the same speech, Pope John Paul II further affirmed the dignity of labour and reminded the landowners and planters that they

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[37] Ibid., 160.
[38] O'Brien interview, 16 July 2002.
[39] PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile..., 1998, 17.
[40] Violeta Lopez-Gonzaga, Elias P. Patriarca, Jr., and Glenn Dennis J. Tan, *People empowerment and Environmental Management: the Pumuloyo experience in Negros Island* (Bacolod City: Institute for Social Research and Development, University of St. La Salle, 1994), 2.
[41] PPDO-NO, 'Socio-economic profile..., 1991, 46.
[42] *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 'Message of John Paul II on the occasion of his visit to Bacolod City,' 73 (1981), 373-380. 376.

> should not be guided in the first place by economic laws of growth and gain, nor by the demands of competition or selfish accumulation of goods, but by the demands of justice and by the moral imperative of contributing to a decent standard of living and to working conditions which make it possible for the workers...to live a life that is truly human and to see all their fundamental rights respected.[43]

Clearly the Pope was critical of wealthy sectors of Negros society whose profits were often accrued from labour exploitation. Although in the same speech, he criticised the armed struggle approach to rectify acute social injustice, his insights concerning the dignity of labour did not sit well with the landed elite of Negros. They suspected that Bp. Fortich had a hand in the Pope's speech and accused the bishop of inciting war.[44]

6.2.3 Antonio Y. Fortich: bishop of the poor

The appointment of Msgr. Antonio Y. Fortich, then the Vicar General, as the third bishop of the Diocese of Bacolod was an important landmark in the reform of the Church in Negros Occidental. He was born in Dumaguete on August 11, 1913 to a wealthy landed and sugar-milling family that had sugarcane workers.[45] The plight of these struggling workers did not escape his notice when he was growing up. As he was reflecting on his vocation to become a priest, he said to himself: 'I would also dedicate my life to the hacienda workers.'[46] He studied at Jesuit-run San José Seminary in Manila for his training in philosophy and theology. He was ordained priest on March 4, 1944 and designated bishop of Bacolod Diocese on January 13, 1967.[47] Fortich in the 1960s promoted *Barangay Sang Virgen* (Virgin of the *Barangay*), a local devotional Marian organisation dominated by the poor, and the Cursillo movement which

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[43] Ibid., 377.
[44] James McCaslin, *The Columban Fathers in the Philippines, Negros: 1950-1990*, (Manila: Missionary of Society of St. Columban, Vol. 4, 2000), 93.
[45] Alan Berlow, *Dead season: a story of murder and revenge in the Philippine island of Negros* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1996), 90.
[46] Interview with Bp. Antonio Y. Fortich, Third Bishop of the Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod, 01 March 2001.
[47] Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, *1986 Catholic Directory of the Philippines* (Manila: CBCP, 1985), 45.

captured the hearts of the rich hacenderos.[48] Ironically, most of these rich *hacenderos* lobbied to the Papal Nuncio for the appointment of Fortich as bishop in Bacolod.[49] The news of his appointment was then met with a sense of euphoria particularly by the rich. Fr. Niall O'Brien describes the support of the *hacenderos* given to the new bishop of Bacolod:

> They (the rich *hacenderos*) presented to the bishop-elect with (sic) a new black Mercedes Benz. It was air-conditioned and had patrician-looking white covers fitted to the seats. Bottles of twelve-year-old Johnny Walker and Chivas Regal were stacked up in the bishop's house.[50]

When he started speaking out against unjust labour relations, many of the rich *hacenderos* disengaged with him, although some of the elite pursued his vision. His relationship with President Marcos, in the early years of his episcopate, was congenial. President Marcos offered him a loan of $340,000 for the sugar milling factory in Daconcogon which is still functioning currently.[51] He convinced President Marcos to sell to the Church the machinery held by the government-owned Philippine National Bank (PNB).[52] His appointment, however, had a specific mission from the Pope. The Papal Nuncio intimated to him on the day of his episcopal ordination on February 24, 1967 that Pope Paul VI appointed him as bishop of the diocese 'to do something for the poor of Negros.'[53]

If the Diocese of Malaybalay had the bold vision of Bp. Claver, the Diocese of Bacolod had the pastoral and charismatic leadership of Bp. Fortich. Both were courageously committed to the Vatican II reforms particularly the Church's involvement in issues around human dignity, social justice and peace. The installation of Fortich as the new bishop was timely for the much

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[48] Victorino A. Rivas, 'Bishop Antonio Y. Fortich: Bishop of the poor and man of peace from Negros Island,' unpublished.
[49] O'Brien, *Island of tears, island of hope...*, 37.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Fortich interview, 01 March 2001.
[52] McCaslin, *The Columban Fathers in the Philippines, Negros, 1950-1990*, 41.
[53] O'Brien, *Island of tears, island of hope...*, 37-38.

awaited reformation of the local Church since it occurred two years after the completion of Vatican II in 1965.

Bp. Fortich's commitment to peace and social justice was resolute. He was a victim of harassments intended to thwart the Church's peace and justice thrust. On January 15, 1985, the bishop's house was burned down by members of *Kristiano Kontra sa Komunismo* (KKK, Christians Against Communism).[54] The perpetrators escaped scot-free. He survived an assassination attempt on April 28, 1987 when a hand grenade was hurled at his residence, the *Domus Dei*.[55] The bishop was unscathed. The following month, some 200 priests, nuns and lay leaders staged a 3-day fast and prayer protest against the persecution of the Church in the person of Bp. Fortich and the slow pace of the investigation.[56] Nonetheless, the police investigation did not yield any conclusive finding.

Before Fortich retired in 1989, the diocese celebrated the first Diocesan Pastoral Congress for Priests in November 11-15, 1985; and the second in November 10-14, 1986, otherwise known as the Priests' Pastoral Congress II. The first congress in 1985 reviewed the social involvement of the Church at the height of anti-Marcos sentiments.[57] This congress led to the establishment of BCCs as a diocesan vision and imperative. The second Congress focused on an analysis of the post-authoritarian situation and provided a pastoral framework for an understanding of the priestly vocation committed to social transformation.

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[54] PCPR, *That we may remember*, (Quezon City: Promotion of Church People's Rights, 1989), 68.
[55] Carla P. Gomez, '200 priests, nuns go on three-day fast,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 19 May 1987.
[56] Ibid.; Carla P. Gomez, '60,000 join Mass for peace,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 24 November 1987, 1 & 2.
[57] Interview with Msgr. Victorino A. Rivas, former Vicar General, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, 05 April 2001.

6.2.4 The Basic Christian Communities (BCCs): towards a participatory Church

The Columban missionaries who had contacts with the Maryknollers initiated BCCs in Negros in the early 1970s.[58] In 1974, the lenten renewal *Alay Kapwa* (offering to people) made critical inroads in making church people become more aware of their social responsibility to the poor.[59] The following year, *Panimbahon* (community worship) became popular in areas where priests were not available for liturgical service. *Panimbahon* was a crucial starting point of the BCC movement in Negros.[60] The high point of BCCs in the diocese during the authoritarian period was the well-known arrest, detention and court trial of the Negros Nine in 1983-84.[61] Three priests and six lay leaders were accused of the ambush-killing of Mayor Pablo Sola of Kabankalan.[62] Evidently this was a trumped-up charge, as in the end the case was dropped after much pressure from the local, national and international communities, particularly from Ireland and Australia where two of the nine detainees, Fr. Niall O'Brien and Fr. Brian Gore, originated respectively. Members of BCCs took turns in giving food and encouragement while the accused were detained in the provincial jail in Bacolod City.

Niall O'Brien, a foremost Columban BCC practitioner in Negros, cites five key elements characterising the BCC movement: sharing of resources whether it be in terms of time, treasure or talent; collective decision-making ensuring participation and empowerment; oriented towards social justice; promotion of healing and reconciliation; and communal prayer *(panimbahon)* which is primarily rooted in biblical scriptures.[63] BCCs in Negros are essentially small, about 20

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[58] Interview with Fr. Romeo E. Empestan, BEC Coordinator, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, 13 March 2001.
[59] 'Primer...
[60] Ibid.
[61] McCoy, *Priests on trial....*
[62] The priests were Fr. Niall O'Brien, Fr. Brian Gore, Fr. Vicente Dangan, and the lay leaders were Jesus Arzaga, Peter Cuales, Lydio Mangao, Geronimo Perez, Ernesto Tajones and Conrado Muhal. See also Niall O'Brien, *Seeds of injustice: reflections on the murder frame-up of the Negros Nine in the Philippines from the Prison Diary of Niall O'Brien* (Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 1985).
[63] O'Brien, *Island of tears, island of hope...*, 127-129.

to 30 families, and geographically close to one another. A further important dimension of BCC is their communion with their pastor.[64] This provides a crucial link between the local community and the diocese. With the assistance of the local pastor, in general, BCCs could respond to local issues without having to wait for the approval from the bishop.

BCC-CO (*cum* community organising) was and still is the more dominant mode of BCC practice in Negros, although there was an attempt in the 1980s to introduce a traditionalist BCC.[65] The Share and Care Apostolate for Poor Settlers (SCAPS), in the early 1970s, had a hand in the community organising (CO) aspect of the Negros BCC.[66] The CO component involves issue-based community action as an essential aspect of BCC. BCC-CO consists not only of organising communities on the basis of territorial proximity, but also extends to the formation of various sectoral groups, such as workers, farmers, women, cultural communities, and so on.[67] The first National BCC-CO conference was convened by NASSA and SCAPS in Cebu City in 1978, two years after BCC in Negros was formalised.

BCCs were not a monolithic movement in the diocese. A tiny segment of moderate BCCs represented by some Columban Fathers espoused non-violent but militant action inspired by the philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi, Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King.[68] Dialogue within BCCs regarding the use of armed revolution as a means to correct social injustice persisted, indicating that there were differentiations within the movement.[69] Nevertheless, BCCs many a time aligned themselves with the political line of CPP-NDF. For instance, BCCs in the elections of 1986 and most in 1992 boycotted the electoral exercise following the official CPP-

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[64] Ibid.
[65] Antonio Y. Fortich, 'Instruction on the Basic Christian Community (BCC) Primer,' 18 February 1987; see Chapter Three concerning BCC-CO.
[66] Empestan interview, 13 March 2001.
[67] Jovito Litang Jr., BCC-CO: a national pastoral strategy, in 'A National consultation of BEC promoters on the social concern of Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines' Tagaytay City, June 18-21, 1996, 41.
[68] O'Brien interview, 16 July 2002.
[69] McCoy, *Priests on trial...*; O'Brien, *Island of tears, island of hope....*

NDF line. Some members joined the armed struggle at the height of militarisation from 1978 to 1980. Sweeping suspicions that the BCCs in their entirety were infiltrated by the Left led to the summary execution of members by military and para-military units.[70]

At its inception in mid-1970 up to the Diocesan Pastoral Congress for Priests (DPCP) in 1985, the implementation and practice of the BCC was left largely to the parish priest or priest in-charge. The BCC thrust then was priest-centred. In addition, its pastoral strategy was unfocused owing to the lack of a coordinating body to link the various BCCs and to provide training and guidelines in promoting BCCs.[71] In 1985, following the DPCP vision to mainstream BCC as a diocesan imperative, Fr. Romeo E. Empestan was appointed BCC Coordinator. His pastoral team was subsequently tasked to promote the growth of BCCs in the diocese. Before the partitioning of the diocese into three in 1987, the Diocese of Bacolod had a very high 81% or 73 out of 90 parishes and chaplaincies which had BCCs.[72] The total membership (active and inactive) was estimated at 192,235.[73] The extent of BCCs operating actively was not uniform. Some parishes were more involved than others. In 1989, 74.5% or 38 out of 51 parishes and chaplaincies had BCCs with a general membership of 84,596 or 10.2% of the total Catholic population in the diocese.[74] Fr. Empestan claims that BCC was steadily declining in the diocese after the February 1986 revolution.[75] The new Aquino government created some democratic space which diffused an all-out conflict with the State unlike during the time of Marcos. In 1996, 10 years after the restoration of democracy in the Philippines, the Diocese of Bacolod could only boast of a general BCC membership of 12,936 or 1.8% of the total population.[76]

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[70] Lopez-Gonzaga, Patriarca, and Tan, *People empowerment and Environmental Management...*, x.
[71] '*Primer....*'
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.; *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*, 53. This appears to be a very generous estimation since the figure includes non-active members.
[75] Empestan interview, 13 March 2001
[76] Another way of expressing the estimation is 34.6% of the total number of parishes and chaplaincies had existing BCCs. 'BCC General Assembly,' Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod, 30 November 1996.

A few factors explain the decline of BCCs/BECs in the diocese. First, the lack of hierarchical support during the time of Bp. Gregorio (from 1989) affected the growth and quality of BCCs/BECs (see next section). Nonetheless, O'Brien claims that while Gregorio did not encourage BCCs, he did not stop them from expanding.[77] He gave more attention to the traditional and renewal communities and those under the Lay Organisations, Movements, and Associations (LOMAS).[78] Second, the decline of BCCs/BECs was a universal phenomenon in the 1980s and 1990s. With the diminishing significance of liberation theology in Latin America, BCCs/BECs likewise suffered similarly, particularly the BCC-CO model employed in the diocese.[79] The decline of the underground Left in the Philippines, particularly its split in early 1990s in the aftermath of the collapse of the Socialist bloc in Europe, further undermined the BCC movement in Negros which had considerable Marxist influence. Third, like many countries in Latin America and Africa, the restoration of democracy in 1986 dissipated a common enemy which for years was the Marcos regime. The democratic space offered by the Aquino government weakened the resolve of BCCs' anti-state stance and ushered in another form of engagement with the government.[80] The people in general adopted a 'wait-and-see' attitude with regard to the new democratic government.[81] They were willing to give the Aquino government a chance. Thus many underground activists, both in Negros and in the whole country, surfaced and left the movement. Finally, the conflict-model or issued-based BCCs/BECs in the diocese needed some rethinking in the light of a democratising state and society. BCC-CO model, one which the diocese adopted, largely operated on the basis of community issues and thrived on conflict. In the post-authoritarian context, creative engagement

[77] O'Brien interview, 16 July 2002.
[78] Interview with Ignacio Javellana, Lay leader of San Antonio Abad Parish, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod, 04 April 2001.
[79] See Chapter Two. It is commonly held that liberation theology provided a theological framework for the BCC movement. See also Levine, *Popular voices in Latin American Catholicism*, 45.
[80] Empestan interview, 13 March 2001.
[81] Ibid., O'Brien interview, 16 July 2002.

with the State rather than just antagonism is needed. The BCCs/BECs needed to participate in development schemes not merely to protest; to deliver services and not just to criticise the State.

Like the Malaybalay diocese, the BCCs/BECs in the Bacolod diocese institutionalised lay participation because of their connectedness with grassroots communities. They became sites of interest articulation and representation, and crucial links to the parish and the diocese, and the civil society groups. While the Diocese of Bacolod stressed issue-based and sectoral organising through its CO component, the Diocese of Malaybalay pursued a more parish-based pastoral form of BECs. The lack of church leadership support in the latter and the fragmentation of the underground movement affected the momentum of BCC/BECs in Negros while in Bukidnon the BECs continued to be vigorous and active owing to the invariable support given by the bishops.

The PCP II Church dropped the term 'BCC-CO' in favour of 'BEC' to put across the ecclesial dimension of these small communities and to dispel suspicions that BCCs were aligned with ideological groups.[82] This debate gained currency not only in the national but also in the local Church in Negros. Although the Diocese of Bacolod started using the term BEC with some misgivings, it tacitly understood BEC to embrace the BCC-CO model.[83]

6.2.5 Dancing with the insurgency movement

Bp. Fortich often likened the oppressive condition in Negros to a social volcano waiting for its massive eruption if left unattended.[84] In Negros, progressive politicisation of the local Church correlated positively with the insurgency movement. When the underground Left was on the rise in the mid-1970s and 1980s, the Church was also increasingly becoming politicised. Nonetheless, when the movement declined in the early 1990s, its political involvement in the diocese likewise diminished *pari passu*. Economic exploitation and political militarisation

[82] Picardal, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines...*, 90-95.
[83] Empestan interview, 13 March 2001; Fortich interview, 01 March 2001.
[84] Ibid.

swelled the ranks of the armed NPA regulars in the province. At the height of the insurgency campaign prior to the underground movement split in 1990s, the armed regulars of NPA controlled five organisational districts in Negros.[85] Each district had one company, about 80 to 120 armed combatants.[86] The NPA was particularly strong in Candoni, Hinoba-an, Ilog, Cauayan, Kabankalan and Sipalay (CHICKS) in southern Negros.

Some elements in the Church actively collaborated with or at least were sympathisers in the cause of the underground Left. Former SAC Director, Fr. Luis Jalandoni, a scion of a landed family in the province, was the first among the Negros clergy to go underground. He became a leading key figure in the NDF and CPP collective leadership over the years. Six other priests from the diocese joined the underground movement, where only Fr. Benjamin E. Escrupulo and another priest in San Carlos Diocese left the movement to go back to the priestly ministry.[87] A few others in the clergy and the religious were part of or closely aligned with the 'church sector' in the movement.[88] Aside from the members of the clergy, scores of BCC members joined the underground movement. In the meantime, a number of sympathisers from both the clergy and lay people particularly those coming from BCCs supported the cause of the CPP-NPA.

Thus the extent of clerical and laity involvement in the underground movement in Negros was much deeper than in Bukidnon. Particularly during the authoritarian period, the Left had a strong influence in the Diocese of Bacolod. Confronted with the same harsh social reality and acting on parallel strategies, there was a thin divide separating the activists in the Church and the underground movement. A number of BCCs, however, maintained their activist stance but

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[85] Interview with Fr. Benjamin E. Escrupulo, Former Parish Priest of Immaculate Conception, Talisay, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod, 09 March 2001.
[86] Ibid. This estimation does not include underground non-combatants, above ground sympathisers, NDF cadres and active card bearing members of the CPP.
[87] Ibid., The other priests who joined the underground movement included Fr. Francisco Fernandez (Chair of NDF - Negros), Fr. Sol Fuentespina (NPA Front Committee Chairperson, Fr. Rufino Gaenga (Secretary of the Central Party Committee), Fr. Alan Abadesco, and Fr. Vicente Pelobello (Head of Regional United Front).
[88] Ibid.; McCaslin, *The Columban Fathers in the Philippines, Negros: 1950-1990*, 76-77.

without subscribing to armed rebellion in confronting social injustice.[89] Bp. Fortich and many others in the clergy likewise maintained an activist stance but did not endorse the armed struggle while respecting the decision of some clergy and lay people who joined the movement.[90] Nonetheless, in Negros, it was only the Left which had a vast network of mass organisations and invariably the most organised group which was profoundly engaged in the struggle of the poor. Seeing no other seriously involved group in the upliftment of the condition of the poor, some church elements maintained links with the underground Left.[91] This collaborative attitude persisted in the post-authoritarian period. Resolution number 3 of Part III in the Priests' Pastoral Congress II in 1986 spelled out its policy in dealing with the underground movement: 'Resolved, that we take *no condemnatory but dialogical stance* towards the CPP-NPA while we reject some of the philosophical assertions of Marxism concerning man, society, and religion.'[92] When the Church launched its peace initiatives in the post-authoritarian period, the Church leadership started to take up a critical public stance against CPP-NPA's armed resistance, although a few elements in the Church continued to justify the armed struggle waged by the revolutionary Left.[93]

The armed Left's influence and attempts to infiltrate church groups and agencies during the martial law period were much more extensive in Bacolod diocese than in Malaybalay diocese. A lot more clergy members and lay leaders were actively involved in the revolutionary movement in Negros than in Bukidnon. In the post-authoritarian period, quite a few of the clergy in Negros remained sympathetic to the revolutionary movement while in Bukidnon such sentiments petered out.

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[89] McCoy, *Priests on trial...*; O'Brien, *Island of tears, island of hope...*,
[90] Interview with Bp. Camilo D. Gregorio, Former Bishop of the Diocese of Bacolod (1989-1999), Bacolod, 31 March 2001; Fortich interview, 01 March 2001.
[91] Rivas interview, 05 April 2001.
[92] Priests Pastoral Congress II, 'The Priest as a witness and an apostle for social transformation,' Diocese of Bacolod, Sacred Heart Seminary, Bacolod, November 10-14, 1986. Emphasis mine.
[93] *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 'Churchfolk may opt for armed revolution,' Bacolod, 11 December 1996, 2.

In sum, Vatican II, along with its post-conciliar social teachings; the ascendancy of Bp. Fortich as bishop of the diocese; the gravity of the socio-political and economic problematic in Negros, prominence of BCCs coupled with the Church's interaction with the extreme Left realigned the trajectory of its political involvement in the authoritarian period. These interrelated factors provided the setting of the local Church's role in the post-authoritarian context.

6.3 The local church in transition

The transition that occurred in the Diocese of Bacolod was much more complex than the one in the Diocese of Malaybalay. Three factors are important in explaining this complexity. First, the Diocese of Bacolod's territory and ecclesial influence was reduced in 1987 following division of the diocese and as a result the creation of the Diocese of Kabankalan and the Diocese of San Carlos. The bishops installed in Kabankalan (Bp. Vicente Navarra) and in San Carlos (Bp. Nicolas Mondejar) were not known for their political involvement. Unlike the young and less progressive Bukidnon Church which was steadily growing, the Negros Occidental Church had become enormous and highly politicised. Although Bp. Fortich had sought this division,[94] it is believed that the Vatican leadership wanted to curb the growing politicisation of the diocese.[95]

Second, a more crucial factor in the transition was the appointment of Bp. Camilo D. Gregorio. He succeeded Bp. Fortich, on May 27, 1989 and formally installed as the fourth bishop of the diocese on July 26, 1989.[96] Bp. Gregorio was born in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija (Northern Philippines), on September 25, 1939. He was ordained priest on December 1, 1963 and then bishop on March 29, 1987. He earned his philosophical and theological training at the

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[94] Fortich interview, 01 March 2001.
[95] Interview with Fr. Edgar S. A. Saguinsin, Renewal and Lay Formation Center Director, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, 04 April 2001. However, Msgr. Victorino Rivas, then the Vicar General to Bp. Fortich, believes that there was no Vatican intervention to curtail the local Church's political involvement (Rivas interview, 05 April 2001).
[96] *1989 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*, 53.

University of Santo Tomas Central Seminary.[97] He got his licentiate and doctorate in Sacred Theology in Rome. He got a degree in Masters in Educational Administration at Fordham University. After his studies abroad, he was assigned in a minor seminary while doing some parish work. After his assignment to San Pablo Seminary in Baguio City, he became the President of the College of Immaculate Conception. In 1984, he was assigned as assistant secretary in the Apostolic Nunciature during the administration of Archbishop Bruno Torpigliani. Before becoming bishop, most of his priestly ministry was devoted either to academic training, teaching or administration with very little parish pastoral experience. His first assignment as bishop was in Cebu City, before going to Bacolod City.

Gregorio knew very little about the diocese although he was forewarned about the 'excesses of liberation theology' in the local Church.[98] He received a warm welcome on his installation as bishop of Bacolod.[99] The LOMAS, particularly the 'renewal communities' coming mostly from rich and middle class background, were particularly delighted with the new bishop since, as they say it, they were not given much attention during the time of Fortich.[100] Gregorio in an effort to affirm that there are other variants of ecclesial communities within the Church, dealt with the charismatic organisations extensively. Bp. Gregorio emphasised spiritual input, much to the delight of the renewal communities. This was perceived by many clergy and lay leaders as an identification with the rich and not with the poor, a regression of what Fortich stood and fought for.[101]

O'Brien recalls that in Bp. Gregorio's first conference with the clergy, he thought it was an excellent theological piece that set his apostolic vision. [102] While he mentioned the

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[97] Gregorio interview, 31 March 2001.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Carla P. Gomez, 'Fortich work lauded; Gregorio welcomed,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 27 July 1989, 1 & 2.
[100] Javellana interview, 04 April 2001.
[101] Saguinsin Interview, 04 April 2001; Interview with Fr. José A. Silverio, Former Parish Priest of San Antonio Abad Parish, Diocese of Bacolod, 29 March 2001.
[102] O'Brien interview, 16 July 2002.

importance of BCCs, he argued for more spiritual development which he feared was getting sidelined by the social thrust of the diocese.[103] Initially, the presbyteral (council of priests) meetings were open and regularly held but in less than a year the mood started changing.[104] Bp. Gregorio's relationship with some priests turned sour. According to Gregorio, there was a segment of the clergy that wanted to 'control all programmes of the diocese...according to their model of the Church...so very little allowance is given to the bishop of the place.'[105] Eventually, the meetings became more focused on internal affairs even when pressing external events were affecting the diocese, less dialogical and more adversarial and confrontational until the meetings became fewer and fewer.[106]

The pastoral strategies, leadership styles and personalities of Bp. Fortich and Bp. Gregorio were in quite striking contrast. Fortich gave priority to BCCs/BECs, Gregorio gave importance to LOMAS, particularly the renewal movement. Fortich's meetings sought consensus building while those of Gregorio were directive and he had the last say. Fortich's style of administration was hands-off, while that of Gregorio was hands-on. The former stressed justice and peace issues while the latter focused on spiritual concerns.

Third, the rise of fundamentalist groups correlated with the growth of charismatic communities in the diocese. The charismatic organisations consisted of the Couples for Christ, Youth for Christ, Bukas-Loob sa Diyos (Generosity to God), Brotherhood of Christian Business and Professionals, Peace Fellowship and other covenant communities. These communities mushroomed in the Diocese of Bacolod as a counterforce to the fundamentalist groups which started attracting the ordinary laity out of the local Church. The renewalist groups in LOMAS

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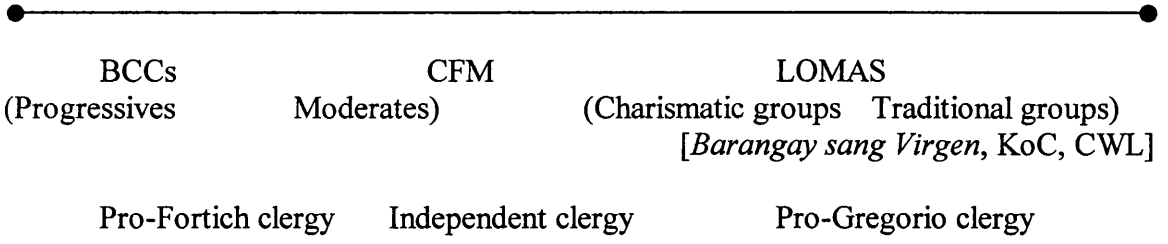
[103] Ibid.
[104] Interview with Dimitri A. Gatia, Presbyteral Council member, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, 06 March 2001.
[105] Gregorio interview, 31 March 2001.
[106] Gatia interview, 06 March 2001.

were lay-led, trans-parochial, and nationally based. These groups were typically middle-class, charismatic in orientation, concerned with spiritual development and less politically inclined.

Evidently then, the local Church in Bacolod became increasingly complex and diverse. The hierarchy became more polarised between those who were more concerned with spiritual development (e.g., Gregorio and renewal communities) and those who pursued the peace and justice thrust of Bp. Fortich. A few members of the clergy were independent, that is, they were neither completely with the pro-Fortich nor with the pro-Greogorio group. This divide was also reflected within the laity which was much more acute in Bacolod diocese than in Malaybalay diocese. The traditional groups in Bacolod diocese (e.g., Barangay sang Virgen, KoC, CWL) and BCCs (progressive and traditionalists) continued in the post-authoritarian period, while charismatic communities were gaining a foothold. The rise of groups like Christian Family Movement (CFM) whose leaders were actively involved in peace issues was also an important development. A simplified ecclesiological spectrum may be able to illustrate this complexity.

Figure 7: Ecclesiological spectrum of Church groups in the Diocese of Bacolod



These groups had varying, and at times overlapping, doctrinal and pastoral tendencies. The progressive BCCs pushed for a radical interpretation of liberation theology and Catholic social teaching (e.g., preferential option for the poor, social justice, comprehensive land reform), and were openly aligned with the NDF. The moderate BCCs were inspired by Ghandi's active non-violent spirituality, but did not differ much with the progressive BCCs in terms of their justice orientation. CFM was a middle class initiative that promoted family values but its members

adopted a reformist view of social change and moderate Catholic social teaching (e.g., sharing of resources with the poor, solidarity, moderate land reform). Although many of them were open to liberation theology, they did not go as far as the progressive Left in the political alignment. The LOMAS had charismatic groups that stressed spiritual renewal and personal conversion and traditional groups that underscored the importance of sacramental celebration, maintained devotional practices (e.g., novenas) and, in some cases, preserved pre-Vatican II spirituality (e.g., primacy of salvation of souls). The more traditionalist groups of LOMAS (Barangay sang Virgen, KoC) were generally supportive of the counter-insurgency campaign and extremely protective of property rights (e.g., anti-comprehensive land reform). Given a deeply divided leadership and intensely competing church groups, hierarchy-laity interaction was much more complex in the Diocese of Bacolod than in the Diocese of Malaybalay. Although the laity in Malaybalay was likewise differentiated, its hierarchy and laity were not as fragmented and deeply divided as in Bacolod.

6.4 The path to peace: a road less travelled

The peace initiatives in the Diocese of Bacolod were an attempt to restore confidence in democratic institutions and processes and, in this way, to make democracy 'the only game in town.'[107] In this condition, democracy, according to Linz and Stephan, 'becomes routinized and deeply internalized in social, institutional, and even psychological life....'[108] Violence and armed conflict threatened democracy in the post-authoritarian Philippines, particularly in Negros. The Diocese of Bacolod along with civil society groups advanced the cause of peace in the province and to some extent on the national scene. Bp. Fortich's role as peacebroker, either as the incumbent or retired Bishop of the See of Bacolod, was crucially important, be it at the

[107] An expression used by Guiseppe di Palma and subsequently adopted by Linz and Stephan. See Linz and Stephan, 'Problems of democratic transition and consolidation..., 5.
[108] Ibid.

provincial, regional or national level. Fortich was acceptable to all the stakeholders of peace: the CPP-NDF-NPA, the government, civil society groups and the people. Bp. Fortich dared both the government and military, and the NPA to stop the armed violence and address the root causes of the insurgency problem. On December 10, 1986 he was chosen to lead the National Ceasefire Committee (NUC) which monitored the ceasefire agreement between the government and the NDF. On that very day in Bacolod, some 100,000 people showed up to celebrate the much awaited national ceasefire, the first since the insurgency movement began in late 1969.[109] The rousing welcome of rebels betrayed the people's massive clamour for peace which was long overdue in Negros Island. For its part, the Bacolod diocese engaged both the government and the CPP-NDF-NPA in promoting a negotiated peace agenda. After the failure of the national peace talks in January 1987, President Aquino gave full backing to retired Bp. Fortich to lead the regional peace panel for Western Visayas in February 1987.[110] Nonetheless, the new post-authoritarian role of the Church in peacemaking and keeping was not always understood by the military and some government officials, and was held suspect by the CPP-NPA leadership.

6.4.1 The National Eucharistic Year: initiating a peace constituency

In launching the National Eucharistic Year (December 8, 1986 to December 8, 1987), the CBCP issued a pastoral letter entitled 'One bread, one body, one people' to highlight the importance of the event.[111] Prompted by the themes of peace, justice and unity in this pastoral letter, the Bacolod diocese celebrated the National Eucharistic Year focusing on the concerns of the CBCP.[112] The Eucharistic year consisted of liturgical celebrations and educational seminars throughout the province to unite the people for lasting peace.[113]

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[109] *The Visayan Daily Star*, 'Cheering crowd welcomes rebels,' Bacolod City, 11 December 1986, 1 & 2.
[110] N. R. Leonardia, 'Cory gives Fortich special mission: in search for peace,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 19 February 1987, 1 & 2.
[111] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 97-107.
[112] *The Visayan Daily Star*, 'Diocese to launch Eucharistic year,' Bacolod City, 05 December 1986, 2.
[113] Ibid.

In the meantime on September 7, 1987, Bp. Fortich issued a pastoral letter after the failed *coup d'etat* on August 28, 1987.

> In our province, in particular, we have been witnesses to the merciless killings of unarmed civilians caught in the middle of armed encounters between the CPP-NPA and the military or as a result of their tactical operations.... we wish to be able to dispel this threatening and terrible nightmare by proclaiming once again at the top of our voice the ABSURDITY OF VIOLENCE and the ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF PEACE.[114]

Fortich was critical not only of the military rebels who plotted against the government. He used this occasion to denounce violence wrought by the armed conflict between the military and the NPA rebels. Clearly at this point, he was delineating, in no uncertain terms, the Church's position vis-a-vis the military and the CPP-NPA, and thus dispelling the suspicion that he was identified with the underground Left.

Culminating the Eucharistic year was the erection of the Tent City at the Sacred Heart Seminary grounds in Bacolod city. People from various parts of the province stayed in tents for one week while attending the Eucharistic Congress for Peace, joining the pilgrimage, and participating in the diocesan-wide Mass led by Bp. Fortich.[115] The Congress had two parts: one for youth (November 16-18) and the other for adults (November 19-21). Delegates of the Congress passed 13 resolutions which urged the Church to support land reform, demilitarisation, nationalism and sovereignty, political education, participatory democracy and partnership with the government on genuine development among other things.[116] A few of these resolutions were captured in the placards of the participants: 'Land reform the answer to rebellion', 'rice not arms.'[117] On November 22, 1987, despite the rain, some 60,000 people, rich and poor alike, and 125 priests led by Bp. Fortich celebrated the Mass which capped the Eucharistic Congress.[118]

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[114] Bp. Antonio Y. Fortich, 'No to violence: a pastoral letter on the civilians' right to life and freedom,' Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, 07 September 1987.
[115] 'Come to the tent city and experience the Eucharist,' Bacolod City, November 16-22, 1987.
[116] *The Visayan Daily Star*, ' 60,000 join Mass for peace,' Bacolod City, 24 November 1987, 1 & 2.
[117] Ibid., 2.
[118] Ibid.

Earlier on, groups had staged a 3-day pilgrimage starting from Hinigaran, La Carlota and Manapla.[119] Indeed the Eucharistic Congress showed the broadest mass mobilisation and advocacy of peace constituents in post-authoritarian Negros. In this sense then, the Church was a crucial actor in mobilising a constituency of peace advocates who equally pursued justice and development. This peace constituency later would be the leading group in various peace campaigns and initiatives like the peace zone in Cantomanyog.

6.4.2 The Cantomanyog peace zone: an initiative from below and strengthened from above

When peace talks between the government and rebel groups collapsed in 1988, various local peace initiatives were tried. Peace awareness, education and advocacy persisted and gained prominence at the height and decline of Operation Thunderbolt, a military offensive in April 1989 against the CPP-NPA in Southern Negros. Brigadier General Raymundo T. Jarque was appointed Negros Island Command (NICOM) Chief. Soon after his appointment, the NPA assaulted a military detachment in Caningay killing and injuring scores of soldiers.[120] This led to a massive military assault on the CHICKS area (part of the Kabankalan diocese from 1987). The NPA presence and influence in these areas were particularly strong. Heavy bombing of Caningay began on April 23, 1989. With five infantry battalions sent around the CHICKS area, the operation was extensive, sustained and heavy.[121] The military, as part of their counter-insurgency campaign, aided the proliferation of vigilante groups such as Bantay Banwa (People Wake up), the anti-communist and anti-land reform Movement for an Independent Negros (MIN), religious fanatical sects, and CAFGUs which were supported by some rich planters to

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[119] Ibid., 1.
[120] Lito Zulueta, 'Church's hand of charity tied in strife-torn Negros,' *The Manila Chronicle* 29 May 1989, 1.
[121] Alfred W. McCoy, 'The Restoration of planter power in La Carlota City, in *From Marcos to Aquino: local perspectives on political transformation in the Philippines*, eds. Benedict J. Kerkvliet and Resil B. Mojares, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press and Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1991), 140.

protect their haciendas.[122] As a result, some 35,000 people were displaced causing the deaths of around 800 children in an evacuation area who died of natural illness brought about by their displacement.[123] By May 7, 1989, the affected areas, including Cantomanyog, were virtually uninhabited. The devastating military operation had the full backing of the Provincial Governor Daniel L. Lacson and of President Corazon C. Aquino.[124] In an effort to flush out the rebels, the operation lasted until June 1989. In this context of persistent armed conflict, the idea of peace zones emerged.

Bp. Fortich was a pioneering church leader who inspired, popularised, and advocated the notion of zones of peace as an imperative in war-torn Negros. In brief, the creation of peace zones hoped to 'enable the civilians....to live in peace in a certain territory declared as a "zone of peace" and recognized as such by the warring forces;....enable the civilians....to work on their livelihood without fear of being harassed by the combatant; ...give opportunities to the people in the "zone of peace" to attain total human development.'[125] Fortich had hoped that the zones of peace could be introduced in the various conflict-laden areas of the country and thus reduce the incidents of armed conflict.[126] His proposal was later taken, endorsed and proposed by some bishops to President Aquino, although no such support was given collectively by CBCP.[127] The bishops supportive of 'Peace Zones' chose Negros Occidental as an experimental area which later could be replicated in every province where there was armed conflict.

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[122] LCFHR, *Vigilantes in the Philippines...*, Chapter III.
[123] O'Brien interview, 16 July 2002; The local papers estimated some 200 children who died. See *The Manila Chronicle*, 'Church hits military crackdown in Negros,' 03 July 1989, 3. O'Brien's estimate seems more credible since he personally conducted the survey while the journalists in Negros tended to sympathise with the Operation Thunderbolt.
[124] Interview with Rafael Coscolluela, Former Provincial Governor of Negros Occidental, Bacolod City, 26 March 2001; Interview with Daniel L. Lacson, Former Provincial Governor of Negros Occidental, Bacolod City, 28 March 2001.
[125] 'Zone of Peace: a concept,' 1st draft for discussion, n.d.
[126] *The Philippine Star*, 'Bishop calls for rural peace zones, 09 May 1989, 1 & 7.
[127] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' conference of the Philippines: letters and statement, 1984-1990* (Quezon City: Cardinal Bea Institute, 1990), 197.

Nominated by European and American organisations for the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, Bp. Fortich envisioned the creation of zones of peace as neutral grounds to 'humanise the conflict,' that is, to free areas from armed conflict so that civilians can get on with their lives.[128] Fortich dared the military and the rebels: 'We are tired already of all this fighting. If you want to fight, you fight beyond this zone in order not to involve the innocent people.'[129] This idea was perceived by critics as naive and simplistic. Some military officers thought this was providing a sanctuary for the rebels who were on the run.[130] Nonetheless, Fortich persisted in his campaign and inspired *sitio* (sub-barrio unit) Cantomanyog, in the municipality of Candoni, Southern Negros Occidental to reinvent its own idea of *sona sa paghida-et* (zone of peace).[131] The residents of Cantomanyog, albeit part of the Diocese of Kabankalan, maintained links with the Diocese of Bacolod through its parish priest Fr. Rolando 'Rolex' Nueva.

The community of Cantomanyog migrated in 1959 from Igbaras, Iloilo under the leadership of Tay Loring who invited 40 heads of families to Cantomanyog. Of this number, five left eventually and thirty-five settled permanently.[132] They cleared the forest and subsequently land was awarded to them. In 1960, their families followed them and settled with them in Cantomanyog. These families were in some way related to each other by blood or legal affinity. They thrived on subsistent farming planting rice, sugarcane, root crops and raised their own farm animals.[133]

Cantomanyog used to belong to *Kaisahan* (United) Farm Settlement Cooperative, a pilot project of the diocese directed by Fr. Luis Jalandoni who had just returned from his studies in

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[128] Paul Richardson, 'Caught in the crossfire in the violent Philippines,' *The Philippines*, IV(3), January 1989, 2.
[129] *The Philippine Star*, Bishop calls for rural peace zones, 7.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Interview with Fr. Rolando Nueva and Corazon Eliseo, Former Parish Priest of Candoni and Cantomanyog lay leader respectively, Kabankalan, 16 March 2001.
[132] Cursory interviews with residents of Cantomanyog, Cantomanyog, Candoni, Negros Occidental, 17 March 2001.
[133] Ibid.

Germany. The Bacolod diocese sent a chaplain to the settlement area even though Cantomanyog was under a parish priest.[134] O'Brien believes that *Kaisahan* sowed the seeds of lay empowerment and human integral development among the peasants in the area including Cantomanyog.[135] Apart from this influence, BCC was another big factor in the community life and action in Cantomanyog. It was introduced in the area in 1975.[136] They had a regular *panimbahon* (community worship) every week and in some occasions the parish priest came to celebrate Mass with them. Aside from the regular *panimbahon*, they had weekly meetings which tried to respond to community issues. The Cantomanyog residents, among many others, were adversely affected and displaced by the military assault on NPA enclaves in April 1989 during Operation Thunderbolt. At the time of military operation, there were about 68 families in Cantomanyog. The evacuees went to Haba Elementary School in Candoni and stayed there until the first week of June 1989 when the evacuees, numbering about 27 families, started returning to Cantomanyog.[137] The military refused to guarantee their safety. But rather than remain in the camp, they decided to go back.[138] Dealing with the violent conflict between the NPA and the military was then a central agenda of the community. Fr. Nueva, then parish priest of Candoni that included Cantomanyog, was actively engaged in the struggle of the community to declare and advocate their own version of *sona sa paghida-et* (zone of peace).[139] Indeed the community made a declaration of their area as a zone of peace on December 26, 1988, but this did not gain any publicity or substantial support from the local Church civil society groups. It was thought that a re-declaration with the support of organised groups would highlight the issues of peace.

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[134] O'Brian interview, 16 July 2002.
[135] Ibid., also Nueva and Eliseo interview, 16 March 2001.
[136] O'Brian interview, 16 July 2002.
[137] Cantomanyog cursory interviews, 17 March 2001.
[138] Nueva and Eliseo interview, 16 March 2001.
[139] Cantomanyog cursory interviews, 17 March 2001.

To draw more attention to the (re)declaration of the zone of peace, a five-day campaign known as the Peace Caravan was initiated and led by the Catholic Church and supported by the PIC and civil society groups; namely, Pax Christi, Negros Priest Forum (NPF), People's Power for Enlightenment and Commitment for Sovereignty and Truth (PENTECOST), Broad Initiatives for Negros Development (BIND), Bulig Foundation, *Paghiliusa sa Paghida-et Negros*, (PsPN, Unity for Peace), a Bacolod City-based peace NGO, and Peace Zone Advocates in Negros (PEZAN), a multi-sectoral formation of peace activists in Negros.[140] These civil society groups had a close affinity with the Church, not simply because the clergy, religious, and lay people were members of these organisations, but primarily because of their commitment to peace and justice in Negros, although ideologically they were differentiated. The church-civil society partnership was anchored on a shared vision for Negros based on peace and justice.

The island-wide (comprising Negros Oriental and Negros Occidental) peace campaign started on February 13, 1990 at a Mass which was held at the Queen of Peace Church in Bacolod City. Thirty priests, including Bp. Emeritus Fortich led the Mass celebration. Bp. Camilo Gregorio in his homily exhorted the people to rally behind the themes of unity, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice with love.[141] Although he along with Bp. Fortich blessed the peace caravan, he remained suspicious that the Left was out to use the campaign for their political ends.[142] The perceived silence of the hierarchical leadership, except Bp. Fortich, betrayed cleavages within the local Church as regards the peace campaign.[143] Bp. Fortich, on the other hand, following the CBCP position maintained that the campaign was a timely response to President Aquino's 'Decade of Peace (1990-2000)' declaration.[144] Some local elite and

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[140] *Ang Kristianong Katilingban*, 'Negros: a caravan for peace,' 4(1), May 1990, 4-6; Interview with Cesar Villanueva, Executive Director, World Futures Studies, St. La Salle University, Bacolod City, 09 March 2001.
[141] Carla P. Gomez, 'Peace trek moves north; rallies held,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 14 February 1990, 1.
[142] Gregorio interview, 31 March 2001.
[143] Simon Peter Gregorio, 'A Negros sito fights for peace,' *Intersect* 5, (June 1991), 10-11.
[144] *Ang Kristianong Katilingban*, 'Negros...,' 4.

hacenderos supported the peace caravan, secretly and overtly.[145] Forty vehicles with about 500 participants joined the caravan.[146] They first headed to the north where a rally was staged in Escalante, the site of the well-known massacre in 1985, killing 21 people and injuring scores of civilians.[147] Later in the afternoon, they arrived in San Carlos City where some 1,000 people awaited them at the plaza.[148] The signing of the scroll of peace led by Bp. Nicolas Mondejar of the Diocese of San Carlos, San Carlos City Mayor Tranquilino Carmona and its Chief of Police Captain Demetria capped the day's events.[149] The following day, the caravan trekked to Bais City in Negros Oriental. Along the way, anti-communist and anti-peace placards read: 'Don't deceive us with your zones of peace,' 'Down with communism,' 'Don't disturb Negros Oriental.'[150] They arrived in Dumaguete City, capital of Negros Oriental at around 3.30 pm. At the central plaza, Bp Fortich read the CBCP pastoral letter, 'Seek peace, pursue it'.[151]

The big event in the peace caravan was on February 16, the planned day for the declaration of the peace zone in Cantomanyog. The peace caravan was held up by barricaders backed by the military under General Raymundo Jarque at Barangay Haba, some three kilometers from Cantomanyog. Negotiations were pursued by peace advocates led by Bp. Fortich to allow the caravan to proceed to Cantomanyog but failed. There were some 2,000 barricaders including residents and evacuees, and some 150 rebel surrenderees and people recruited from other places as far as Sipalay and Cauayan.[152] These barricaders denounced the peace zone project and church leaders as communists.[153] Seeing no breakthrough in the impasse,

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[145] Empestan interview, 13 March 2001.
[146] *The Visayan Daily Star*, 'Weeklong caravan begins,' 13 February 1990, 1-2.
[147] Gomez, 'Peace trek moves north, rallies held, 2
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.
[150] *The Visayan Daily Star*, 'Peace caravan in Oriental moving to Sipalay today,' 15 February 1990, 1.
[151] Niall O'Brien, SSC, 'Zone of peace declared in the Philippines,' *Pax Christi USA*, XV(2) (Summer 1990), 18.
[152] Ma. Theresa Marcelo, 'Peace zone declared,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 17-18 February 1990, 2.
[153] Ibid.

the peace campaigners celebrated Mass after which Natividad Epulan, a Cantomanyog resident, read the zone of peace declaration. Their declaration read:

> We desire peace and quiet that will last so that we can develop our lives and livelihood. The prevalence of peace is a necessary condition if we are going to confront poverty and injustice. In short, we desire to have peace, prosperity of people based on justice.[154]

Thus Cantomanyog became one of the first peace zones in the Philippines.[155] The Cantomanyog community sought a model of development which was rooted in justice, but this would not be possible without peace. It was never endorsed by the military, and the local government, or by the rebel returnees or the CPP leadership. For the military, this was merely a strategic ploy of the NPA who were on the run because of persistent military attacks.[156] Peace havens were seen as obstacles to their all-out war with the rebels. In the minds of the local government leaders, the lack of consultation and their exclusion in the peace campaign rendered the whole project void from the very start. The Municipal Mayors' League, whose membership of 19 mayors, unanimously endorsed a resolution criticizing the creation of peace zone chiefly because they were not consulted in the peace plan.[157] But since they were actively engaged in the counter-insurgency campaign that endorsed a total war policy, they were unlikely to be sympathetic to the cause of peace espoused by the residents of Cantomanyog. For the rebel returnees like the Brotherhood of Organized Resignees from CPP in Negros (BORN), it was a CPP/NPA ploy to gain belligerency status under international law, divide the clergy in Negros, protect the NPA and manipulate the outcome of this peace initiative.[158] For the CPP leadership, the establishment

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[154] 'Pamat-ud sa pagtukod sang isa-ka sona sang paghidaet' ('Declaration concerning the establishment of a zone for peace'), December 26, 1988. Translated by Antonio Moreno with the assistance of Niall O'Brien. Full text in Section 2, Appendices.
[155] There were other peace zones in the country which grew out of different contexts. These included the ones in Tulunan, North Cotabato, in Sagada, and in Bangilo, Malibcong, Abra.
[156] Carla P. Gomez, 'Mayors oppose zones of peace,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 13 February 1990, 2.
[157] Ibid., 1 & 2.
[158] Arman Pelayo Toga, 'Peace zone promotes conflict?' *Today*, 23 February 1990, 3.

of the peace zone militated against the revolutionary struggle waged in the countryside, although some local NPA regulars and NDF sympathisers were open to this initiative.[159]

While the Diocese of Bacolod played a crucial role in supporting and advocating for the struggle of Cantomanyog to launch its own version of peace zone, ultimately it was the persistence of the BCCs that made their area free from armed conflict.[160] The idea of a peace zone was not imposed from above by the ecclesiastical authorities, neither was it engineered solely by peace advocates but essentially initiated by the community and supported by the Church leadership and civil society actors.[161] The residents relentlessly talked to and persuaded armed groups from both sides to respect their declaration. They confronted their respective field commanders when a violation was reported.[162] And this was done repeatedly and persistently until 1993 when armed groups were no longer seen in the area.[163] Although Cantomanyog and Fr. Rolex Nueva were not part of the Diocese of Bacolod, it cannot be denied that the influence of *Kaisahan* (to which Cantomanyog used to belong), the flow of chaplains that ministered to *Kaisahan*, and the BCC movement were made possible, thanks to the support of the diocese. O'Brien believes that the language of the declaration shows some similarities with the idea of total human development and justice thrust characteristic of the *Kaisahan* project of the diocese in the 1970s.[164] Moreover, at the time of the (second) declaration of the peace zone, the support extended by the Bacolod diocese and civil society organisations expanded the projection of the advocacy, despite some misgivings on the part of Bp. Gregorio.

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[159] Maria Serena I. Diokno, *The 1986-1987 Peace Talks: a reportage of contention.* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, Center for Integrative and Development Studies and the UP Press), 92-94; *The Philippine Star*, 'Bishop calls for rural peace zones,' 09 May 1989, 7.
[160] Villanueva interview, 09 March 2001.
[161] O'Brien interview, 16 July 2002.
[162] Nueva and Eliseo interview, 16 March 2001.
[163] Ibid.; Cantomanyog cursory interviews, 17 March 2001.
[164] See Appendix 2 in Appendices; O'Brian interview, 16 July 2002.

One view argues that the peace zone failed as envisioned. The creation of the peace zone was not so much due to the persistence of community to negotiate with the armed groups, but because of the gradual withdrawal of the NPA in the area.[165] The gradual withdrawal may well have been a factor, but the sightings of armed NPA in the area showed that they were not just phasing out of the scene.[166] Thus the people's declaration, matched with relentless action to persuade the combatants to withdraw from the place, was crucial in averting further violence.[167] The community's efforts were a deterrent factor in the continued operations of the armed groups. In addition, Cantomanyog envisioned peace where development of the people was founded on justice.[168] Peace was not simply the absence of violence, but necessarily included genuine development. This was further affirmed when Cantomanyog became a recipient of the Aurora Quezon Peace Award in 1991.[169] The government for its part awarded a development fund ($100,000) to Cantomanyog.[170] The money was used to widen the road connecting *sitio* Cantomanyog to Candoni municipality, strengthen the community cooperative project and other related programmes.[171] All these could not have happened if both the military and the NPA simply withdrew without purposive community action ensuring peace and development.

The Cantomanyog experience was not replicated in ways that Fortich envisioned and neither did it influence the creation of other peace zones. Fortich's version of a peace zone was the inspiration, but it was the people who initiated and gave it a human face.[172] Even before the 5-day island-wide peace caravan was launched, Cantomanyog had already declared their area as

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[165] Gordoncillo interview, 06 April 2001.
[166] Cantomanyog cursory interviews, 17 March 2001.
[167] Nueva and Eliseo interview, 16 March 2001.
[168] 'Pamat-ud sa pagtukod sang isa-ka sona sang paghidaet,' Cantomanyog, Negros Occidental, 26 December 1988.
[169] Nueva and Eliseo interview, 16 March 2001.
[170] As part of confidence building measure, the development funds were also given to the other peace zones (see footnote 155, same chapter). President Ramos declared seven peace zones as Special Peace and Development Areas (Catomanyog including) and awarded a total of Php 24,290,750 (~$485,815). See Coronel-Ferrer, *Peace matters...*, 180.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid.

conflict-free zone on December 26, 1986, but it did not gain sufficient public attention. Nonetheless, it was the community that relentlessly engaged the parties involved, both the military and the NPA. Thus it was basically an initiative from the local BCC residents themselves with the assistance of their parish priest Fr. Nueva to formulate their own version of *sona sa paghida-et* (zone of peace).[173] He frequently visited Cantomanyog. His presence and participation proved pivotal in empowering the locals to create their own version of the peace zone. Additionally, he was a key liaison to the larger local Churches (Diocese of Bacolod and Diocese of Kabankalan) and the peace advocates.

The Cantomanyog peace zone became a living symbol of the aspirations of peace advocates and the citizens. Former Negros Occidental Governor Rafael Coscolluela claims that the campaign 'proved that there was a peace constituency....by a good number of people' owing largely to the initiative of the BCC in Cantomanyog coupled with the support of the Diocese of Bacolod along with other peace advocates.[174] The mobilisation showed plainly that the peace had a sizeable following which was not simply to be dismissed. In the declaration of Cantomanyog's peace zone, at once the peace initiative from below (Cantomanyog) and peace advocacy from above (church leaders, peace advocates) intersected to address issues spawned by armed conflict. The Church's role in orchestrating a multi-sectoral peace caravan proved that it could form partnership with civil society. It is rather unfortunate that the Cantomanyog experience was not replicated as Bp Fortich had intended, although other peaces zones in the country sprang up from different conditions.[175] It is equally unfortunate that the peace contingency was not sustained beyond the barricade in Cantomanyog. Peace advocacies after

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[173] Villanueva interview, 09 March 2001.
[174] Coscolluela interview, 26 March 2001.
[175] There was an attempt to replicate the experience in Barangay Bantayan, Kabankalan but it was largely centred on its proponent Fiscal Rolando Parpa, with very little community participation and empowerment, if any. See Avelyn Z. Agudon, 'Second peace zone in south declared,' *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 27 October 2000, 1 & 4.

the collapse of the government and NDF negotiations were left to local government and church leaders with very little involvement from the peace contingency.

Various peace advocacies of the diocese continued since the retirement of Bp. Fortich as Bishop of Bacolod on January 31, 1989, but it did not have as much support from peace advocates as before. In the wake of the stalled national peace talks, both Bp. Gregorio and retired Bp. Fortich pursued local peace talks for the province of Negros Occidental. On September 25, 1991, Governor Daniel Lacson announced a 10-day ceasefire in Negros, the first province in the Philippines to attempt a voluntary ceasefire.[176] For this purpose, a Peace Committee was set up which included Bp. Gregorio and retired Bp. Fortich. The committee sought ways and means to engage the rebels to go back to the negotiating table. Meanwhile, this was utterly rejected by NDF-Negros sensing that it was a 'vile scheme to divide-and-rule.'[177] Notwithstanding some reported skirmishes between the military and the NPA, and the rejection of the offer of local peace talks by the NDF, the local ceasefire was extended for another 10-day period.[178] Despite repeated appeals by the Peace Committee to convince the NDF to engage the local peace negotiations, no progress was made. The diocese made more attempts in local peace talks in 1992 through the ex-priests who joined the underground movement, but to no avail.[179] In 1999, after the failed national peace talks, local talks were relentlessly pursued, but then again failed for the same reason that the NDF wanted comprehensive talks, not local peace initiatives. Complicating the situation of armed conflict was the persistent counter-insurgency campaigns of military and para-military units (often supported by the landed elite) that only bred more violence and suspicion about the trustworthiness of the government.

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[176] Carla P. Gomez, '10-day Negros ceasefire starts,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 25 September 1991, 1 & 14.
[177] Ibid., 14.
[178] Carla P. Gomez, 'Ceasefire extended for 10 more days,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 04 October 1991, 1 & 2.
[179] Eric T. Loretizo, 'Gregorio wants Fortich's help,' *Today News-Views*, 15 September 1992, 1.

In sum, all these peace initiatives starting from the National Eucharistic Year (1986-1987) up until 1999 did not just simply fall by the wayside. The peace campaigns sent strong signals to the government that the military approach to the problem was not the solution and to the CPP-NPA that the revolution being waged was not really pro-poor as the poor were the ones caught in the firing line. The formation of a peace constituency made it clear that the citizenry had as much stake in the peace process as the government and the rebel forces. Sustaining the peace movement was altogether another matter when the national leadership from both the government and the NDF failed to reach any agreement.

In many ways, the San Fernando and Wao experiences in the Bukidnon Church are comparable to the Cantomanyog case in Negros. First, both cases engendered the formation of an awakened and informed citizenry committed to environmental protection (Bukidnon) and peace (Negros). Evidently a new wave of citizenship emerged which was firmly resolved to make democracy work given the fragility of the political institutions.

Second, both cases started their political awakening through the BCC and with the inspiration and accompaniment of their parish priests, Fr. Kelly (San Fernando) and Fr. Almedilla with Edna Espinosa (Wao) for Bukidnon Church and Fr. Nueva for Negros. These leaders played crucial roles as link persons in their respective dioceses. Here, church *ad intra* dynamics (hierarchy-laity interaction) played an important role despite some indications of profound internal cracks in the leadership and laity of the Diocese of Bacolod.

Third, the hierarchical leadership addressed these local issues. In Malaybalay diocese, it was Bp. Rosales' leadership that propped up the cause of San Fernando, and Bp. Pacana for the Wao advocacy. This once local issue eventually became the whole concern of the diocese, province and the whole nation. In Bacolod diocese, it was mainly Bp. Emeritus Fortich who championed the peace advocacy, although to a limited extent, it had the blessing of Bp. Gregorio and Bp. Vicente Navarra who had ecclesial jurisdiction over Cantomanyog, part of Kabankalan

diocese. Gregorio's ambivalent support showed division in the hierarchical leadership. Similarly, some bishops endorsed the peace zones and local peace initiatives in Negros, although the CBCP was not wholly convinced of the peace zones. In the case of Bukidnon, the CBCP and MSPC collectively endorsed the environmental advocacy in San Fernando culminating in the issuance of the first pastoral letter on the environment.

Fourth, local and national civil society organisations in both cases were crucial actors in the protest movement. Church-civil society linkage proved vital in the formation of peace and environmental constituencies. While the Diocese of Malaybalay succeeded in their lobby for a total log ban in the province, but frustrated in the national advocacy, the Diocese of Bacolod failed to press for the cessation of armed hostilities in Negros aside from Cantomanyog. Part of the difficulty in the local peace processes in 1987 to 1990 was the resistance of the CPP-NDF, the continued operation of para-military units often propped up by the military and at times by the landed elite, and the opposition of local and provincial officials to go along with the peace advocates, whereas the environmental advocacy in Bukidnon, except the advocacy in Wao, had a strong endorsement from local and provincial officials, and the sympathy from the national government through DENR. The only opposition against the total log ban was mainly from the logging companies and a small band of locals and *lumad* who worked for the companies.

6.5 Human rights advocacy and restoring the primacy of law

Human rights advocacy in the Diocese of Bacolod many a time affirmed the primacy of the legal framework (rule of law), although in some cases when the law did not safeguard fundamental rights (e.g., death penalty), the law was challenged. The local Church's commitment to human rights included the provision of legal counsel in court cases, legal education and advocacy, documentation of human rights violations, and securing the release of those unjustly detained. In all these areas, the Legal Aid Office (LAO) of the diocese in coordination with Social Action

Center (SAC) was the leading agent. LAO, set up in 1969, was initially funded by Trocaire, an Irish funding agency, through the mediation of the Irish Columbans in Southern Negros Occidental.[180] The Columbans for some time covered half of the budget for the LAO.[181] Attorney Francisco Cruz, then one of the two lawyers, continued his legal services till its closure in 1999. In the mid-1970s, two norms were laid out in accepting cases: first, 'the case should involve social problems such as those involving labour, landgrabbing, squatters...and those involving misconduct of public officials....,' and second, 'the people involved are poor....'[182] Services offered by the LAO covered representation in court cases, public notaries, legal advice, weekly para-legal training sessions on human rights education and advocacy, and legal documentation for at least five years in the mid-1980s covering the areas Kabankalan, Himamaylan, Sipalay, and other places upon request.[183] In many cases, the lawyers had to go to detention centres where suspects were illegally detained, interrogated and at times tortured, to seek their immediate release.[184] While these courts were ordinarily beyond the reach of poor people, at the very least LAO opened the avenue for the poor to seek legal contestation not only in lower courts but even in the highest tribunal such as the Supreme Court. Court decisions, however, tended to favour the propertied and influential sectors of society.[185] The most celebrated cases represented by LAO included the internationally known detention of the Negros Nine in 1983 and the massacre in Escalante in 1985. When the diocese was divided into three local Churches in 1987, LAO continued its services to the Diocese of Kabankalan and the Diocese of San Carlos which were no longer part of the See of Bacolod.

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[180] Interview with Atty. Francisco Cruz, Legal Aid Office Lawyer, Bacolod City, 08 March 2001.
[181] McCaslin, *The Columban Fathers in the Philippines, Negros: 1950-1990*, 61.
[182] Atty. Francisco Cruz, Letter to Fr. Rufino Suplido, Jr., Social Action Center Director, Diocese of Bacolod, 13 September 1975.
[183]Francisco Cruz, 'Letter to Fr. Rufino Suplido, Jr., Social Action Center Director,' Diocese of Bacolod, 09 January 1976; Interview with Atty. Romeo Subaldo, Legal Aid Office Lawyer, Bacolod City, 27 March 2001.
[184] Subaldo interview, 27 March 2001.
[185] Francisco Cruz, 'Letter to Fr. Rufino Suplido, Jr.,' Social Action Center Director, Diocese of Bacolod, 03 January 1978.

As a matter of policy in SAC, cases involving human rights violation of groups or individuals identified with the underground Left were separated from the civil and criminal cases to shield the Church from being linked to the movement.[186] The Free Legal Action Group (FLAG) handled the former while the LAO tackled the latter. Lawyers of LAO, however, were affiliated with FLAG, so that it was the same lawyers who handled the civil and criminal cases. Thus it is very difficult to distinguish how many overtly political cases were dealt with and supported by the diocese and how many were handled by FLAG. LAO and FLAG had a tight partnership particularly in dealing with political cases. Atty. Cruz reports that the post-authoritarian period saw a significant rise of land ejection cases.[187] Close to half (48%) of all the pending cases or about 22 cases on a yearly average from 1986 to its closure in 1999 were court litigations linked to land ejection issues.[188] The rise of land ejection cases (e.g., relocation of Sincang residents below) can be explained by the rapid expansion of the urban centre and the repossession of urban sites by landowners and other claimants.[189] In this growing trend, the urban poor were most susceptible to land ejection. In 1998, the Philippine bishops took notice of this phenomenon and affirmed the right to development as a fundamental human right.[190]

The conventional argument holds the view that human rights transgressions are largely imputed to the establishment (the Philippine government being a signatory of the international human rights statutes), but extra-judicial killings were not a monopoly of the government, the military or quasi-military agencies. These killings militated further against the already weak political institutions including the legal system – a requisite of a functioning democracy. The

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[186] Cruz interview, 08 March 2001.
[187] Francisco Cruz, 'Letter to Fr. Ireneo Gordoncillo,' Social Action Center Director, Diocese of Bacolod, 23 January 1989.
[188] Data extrapolated from the yearly reports of Francisco Cruz to the Social Action Center Director from 1987 to 1999.
[189] Cruz, 'Letter to Fr. Ireneo Gordoncillo.'
[190] 'A Pastoral letter on human rights.' Available from http://www.cbcponline.org/documents/1990s/1998-human_rights.html, 21 February 2003.

killing of José Tanpinco Jr., a labour leader and former member of CPP-NPA, in July 1988 by suspected members of the NPA sparrow unit illustrates this point. His killing was never condemned by BCCs, SAC, TFD, the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR), or by any clergy member whose ideological sympathy was with the CPP-NPA.[191] Despite a noticeable number of victims of extra-judicial killings,[192] the Diocese of Bacolod was uneven in denouncing such atrocities. The CBCP, on the other hand, unreservedly denounced terrorism against those who stood for principled social involvement, and those persecuted as 'subversives by the Right or as informers and "enemies of the people" by the Left.'[193] This position was affirmed in its subsequent pastoral letters on peace.[194]

With two to four lawyers serving LAO its operation was much more extensive than in the Diocese of Malaybalay which had only one lawyer. LAO and Bukidnon's Legal Aid Bureau have some shared practices and gains. Like the Malaybalay diocese's legal aid programme, LAO made good progress in its attempt to reinvent the justice system as a democratic institution in the province. First, its weekly para-legal training and advice given to its clients helped the poor become more aware their rights and duties as citizens of the land. Legal education and advocacy, like the Bukidnon experience, became a central means of mobilising people in Negros and making them more conscious of their understanding and exercise of their citizenship. Second, by representing the poor whose access to legal contestation is extremely limited, the lawyers and staff of the LAO enabled their clients to be participants in the remaking of an imperfect judicial system, a key institution in any democratic polity. In this sense, the poor were given a voice in the dispensation of justice. As early as 1977, they had already 'placed the

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[191] Carla P. Gomez, 'Ex-CPP members hit movement,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 07 July 1988; 1 & 2.
[192] Commission on Human Rights (CHR), 'Year-end reports (from 1991 to 2000),' Bacolod Sub-Office, Bacolod City.
[193] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines...*, 45-46.
[194] Ibid., 182-183, 197-203, 218-227.

Highest Tribunal (e.g., the Supreme Court) within the reach of the poor.'[195] Finally the attempts to release those illegally detained in military and para-military detention centres, not only spared the lives of detainees of undue harm, but reinforced the primacy of the judicial institution as the proper venue for administering justice and law. Thus the Church was determined to uphold human rights within the legal framework, albeit an imperfect one.

6.6 The Relocation of Sincang residents

The relocation of Sincang residents demonstrates the local Church's resolve to affirm the right to development as a basic human right. In 1985, a notice of ejection was served to the community of *sitio* Sincang. The land occupied by the community was a prime commercial lot owned by Dr. Antonio Lizares Co., Inc., and later sold to Dynasty Management and Development Corporation (DMDC), a subsidiary of Gaisano, Inc. Seeing no assistance from the government or from any organisation, the community sought the help of Fr. Tomas Rito, the SAC Director.[196] Upon the recommendation of SAC, LAO handled the court case filed by Lizares Co., Inc., charging every resident of violating the anti-squatting law (Presidential Decree 772). This land comprised three *puroks*[197] probably close to 300 households consisting of one BCC belonging to the parish of St. Joseph.[198] Many of the residents had been there since the 1960s. The BCC evolved in the 1970s from *Barangay sang Virgen*. In 1988, another notice of land ejection was issued. Negotiations and more court hearings ensued, and still the people were firmly resolved in their decision to stay put. A few of the individual residents lost their cases, but LAO persistently made motions for reconsideration to delay the demolition until a relocation settlement was in sight. The Lizareses offered a resettlement area in the interior portion of the lot

[195] Cruz, 'Letter to Fr. Rufino Suplido, Jr.'
[196] Interview with Fr. Tomas E. Rito, Former Social Action Director, Diocese of Bacolod, Bago City, 03 March 2001.
[197] Sub-units in a *barangay*.
[198] Interview with leaders of Sincang residents, Sum-ag, Bacolod City 07 April 2001.

as the part they were occupying was a prime commercial lot.[199] The residents, however, maintained their position and refused to be resettled arguing that they had occupied the land back in the 1960s. In the meantime, Fr. Rito brought the issue to the attention of newly installed Bp. Gregorio who showed keen interest in the amicable resolution of the case. From 1993 when the sale of the land became apparent, the new owner, DMDC, offered a lot in Alijis, Bacolod City, of 54 square meters per family or a financial compensation depending on the land area they occupied.[200] Some took the offer but most of them refused to leave. While the legal battle intensified, the community sought help from a neighbouring BCC and the parish through Columban Father Eamon Gill, their parish priest. A string of mass mobilisations were launched by the residents. They first marched in the streets of Bacolod. Next, they picketed the Mayor's office in City Hall, but the Mayor did not side with them.[201] They picketed the Hall of Justice where the hearings took place to influence the outcome of the court proceeding. On April 15, 1996, they also picketed Gaisano Inc., to press the management against the eviction and expose its unfair labour practices.[202] Meanwhile Bp. Camilo Gregorio supported the community and used his influence by writing to Gaisano to grant the people's demands while negotiations were underway.[203] Finally the court decided in favour of Gaisano, paving the way for eviction. On October 23, 1996, the day of eviction, the community with the help of the other BCCs nearby, barricaded their area.[204] Assisted by neighbouring BCC/BECs, residents, including children, formed a human barricade.[205] It was almost a violent encounter between the people and the

[199] Leaders of Sincang residents interview, 07 April 2001.
[200] Amy Luz U. Catalan, 'Protest vs. Gaisano,' *Sun Star – Bacolod*, 16 April 1996, 12.
[201] Leaders of Sincang interview, 07 April 2001.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Rito interview, 03 March 2001.
[204] Leaders of Sincang interview, 07 April 2001.
[205] Ibid.

police together with a demolition team equipped with guns and demolition tools. Frs. Rito and Gill, and a few church staff assisted the community in negotiating a peaceful resolution.[206]

Fr. Rito claims that the presence and negotiation skills of church leaders averted bloodshed and forced displacement of the people.[207] In the course of out-of-court negotiations, an amicable settlement was made. The demolition was suspended to give time for the residents to transfer to their new relocation site. It was agreed that Gaisano pay each household $200.00.[208] They finally were able to find a site in Suma-ag, some 7 kilometers south of the heart of Bacolod City. The resettlement site had a total of 18,782 square meters which was just enough for some 150 households.[209] Each household was given at least 120 square meters. Gradually, the residents transferred. By December 1997 they had already settled in Suma-ag. To celebrate this successful resolution of the issue, a Mass was presided over by Bp. Gregorio who gave full backing to the community through its SAC Director and their parish priest.

Three lessons are in order in the narrative of the relocation of Sincang residents. First, the continuous interaction between the BCC/BEC and Bp. Gregorio, through Fr. Rito with the backing of Fr. Gill, strengthened the determination of the community. This demonstrates what has been consistently argued in this thesis: increased hierarchical-laity interaction brings about more cohesion, widens the avenue for participation, and deepens the Church's capacity for political engagement. Here, the role of SAC Director Fr. Rito and parish priest Fr. Gill proved to be pivotal in initiating and sustaining the struggle and participation. Although civil society groups did not figure prominently in this campaign, external support came mainly from the parishes and BCC/BECs nearby, and from local politicians through the mediation of Fr. Rito and

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[206] Ibid.
[207] Rito interview, 03 March 2001.
[208] Leaders of Sincang interview, 07 April 2001. To avoid the perception that they allowed themselves to be bought by Gaisano, they deposited the money for safekeeping at SAC. This money was later used to purchase the settlement site.
[209] Ibid.

Fr. Gill.[210] The persistent mass mobilisation and advocacy mounted public pressure for an amicable settlement. Thus despite losing the legal battle, the community was able to bargain and negotiate from a position of strength in the out-of-court negotiations.

Second, the intervention and support of the Bishop added more weight to the cause of the residents. Logistical assistance and judicious use of his influence as head of the local Church made an impact on the conduct of the negotiations. Unfortunately, interventions of this kind issuing from the bishop were few and far between. Although the community, thanks to the BCC/BECs, was relatively organised and socially aware, they still needed external assistance particularly legal aid, logistics and organisational support.

Third, once again, the potential of BCC/BECs to initiate and sustain participation and advocacy around issues that affected them was evident in this case. Collective decisions were arrived at through extensive consultation and participation of members. The BCCs were relatively cohesive, although many of them went either to Alijis or Handumanan, nearby places within the city. In a sense, collective decision and action flowed inevitably from the BCC.

6.7 Division within the diocese

The internal division that struck the Bacolod diocese adversely affected the local Church's pastoral strategies and priorities. At this juncture, the Diocese of Bacolod's *ad intra* dynamics failed miserably causing a strain in bishop-priests relationship, and by extension, widening the Fortich-Gregorio rift, bishop-laity conflict, division among the priests and among the laity, and between priests and lay people. The multi-level internal tensions were a very sad, if not ugly, moment in the whole history of the diocese.

These internal conflicts were openly seen in the way the diocese dealt with the refugees who moved from the Provincial Administration Center to the Sacred Heart Seminary in Bacolod

[210] Rito interview, 03 March 2001.

City months after the Operation Thunderbolt in 1989. The refugees did not want to leave the seminary compound because they did not want to have a repeat of the military-NPA conflict and the threat of para-military units and fanatical sects harassing the civilians suspected as NPA sympathisers.[211] The leaders of conservative groups *Barangay sang Virgen* and KoC supported Bp. Gregorio's stance that the Left were using the 300 evacuees to halt military operations in Southern Negros.[212] Some clergymen and lay leaders supported the cause of the evacuees which others perceived to be a manipulation and infiltration by the Left.[213] Although Bp. Gregorio tolerated their stay in the seminary compound, the division between him, some clergy and lay leaders, and those sympathetic to the refugees, who had a sizable backing from the clergy and lay leaders, deepened and became irreversible.

Compounding the already obvious division between the two bishops was the distrust and disdain that each camp had for the other which was already lurking during the time of Fortich. Accusations of mishandling of church funds hurled against each other became divisive. Retired Bp. Fortich was identified with the other side and further accused of meddling in the internal affairs of the Church.[214] Both had a sizable following so that the rifts were visible in the whole Church, conveniently labelled in terms of 'leftist' (Fortich group) and 'rightist' (Gregorio group). The outcome of this internal rift deeply polarised, if not demobilised to some extent, the diocese's socio-political engagement.

The conflict was most noticeable during the Diocesan Pastoral Congress, a supposedly defining moment in the history of the diocese when the local Church would appropriate and implement the renewal set out by PCP II and redefine the diocesan pastoral thrust.[215] The

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[211] McCaslin, *The Columban Fathers in the Philippines...*, 110-111.
[212] Ibid. See also *The Visayan Daily Star*, '600 support Gregorio,' 08 November 1989, 1 & 2.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Carla P. Gomez, 'Heal wounds of division: clergy faithful urged as Navarra takes over diocese,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 4 September 2000, 1 & 12.
[215] *Quinquennial Report*, Bacolod: Diocese of Bacolod, 1996.

Congress, much awaited by the local Church, was held from November 15 to 20, 1993. Of the 346 participants, at least 60% were lay people, the first time in the history of the diocese where they participated in a diocesan-wide pastoral planning.[216] Gregorio argued that in the Congress, the participants were 'one with the bishop' meaning that there was 'ecclesial consensus' in the formulation of the decrees.[217] The key to the 'success' of the Congress, as Gregorio emphatically put it, was that 'the Bishop had the last say.'[218] In the end it was indeed Bp. Gregorio who had the last say, but the Congress was hardly a success. Participants were not able to connect with the approved decrees as truly theirs.[219] More importantly, there was no implementation or follow through of the approved resolutions.[220] The leaders of San Antonio Abad parish ignored the Congress decrees but pursued the directives of PCP II.[221] Seven years after the Congress, copies of the Congress resolutions were still not distributed.

There were some modifications in the process, claims Ignacio Javellana, the only lay member of the Council of the Congress.[222] The first level of modification was done by the collators who were not moving around enough to capture the spirit behind the group resolutions. Then a committee of four (an informal structure of the Congress) synthesised the reports from the workshop groups which did not reflect many views in the group sharing.[223] Gregorio noticed that this small group was manipulating the outcome of the congress.[224] Nonetheless, Msgr. Victorino Rivas, then the Vicar General, dismissed the existence of manipulation in the Congress.[225] Finally, the bishop made modifications and injected additional materials in the

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[216] Ibid.
[217] Bp. Camilo Gregorio, 'The Diocesan Pastoral Congress of Bacolod,' in *Acts and Decrees of the Diocesan Pastoral Congress of Bacolod*, Diocese of Bacolod, 1994, 1-4.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Javellana interview, 04 April 2001; Rivas interview, 07 March 2001.
[220] Gregorio interview, 31 March 2001.
[221] Javellana interview, 04 April 2001.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Gregorio interview, 31 March 2001.
[225] Rivas interview, 05 April 2001.

final decrees.[226] Divisive issues included the status of LOMAS, including the renewal communities, whether or not these organisations would qualify as BECs since they were not based in a particular territory. Another thorny issue was the suspicion that some church funds were not properly accounted for, thus raising suspicions that these were probably channelled to the underground movement.[227] No thorough investigation was conducted and the suspicions remained undetermined.

Gregorio later admitted that the Congress did not succeed because there were just too many attempts at renewal like the *Tertio Millenio Adveniente*, a three-year preparation for the Jubilee Year in 2000.[228] Thus it left no space for the people to internalise the Diocesan Pastoral Congress. The main reason, however, was the deep seated conflict that was dividing the diocese. Attempts were made through the mediation of Cardinal Sin in 1996 to sort out the crisis but to no avail. The internal tiff took a serious turn in November 1999 and the media played up on the conflict. Invectives were hurled against each other. Talk about Bp. Gregorio's resignation was rife. On February 24, an open letter signed by 42 priests was addressed to Msgr. Rodolfo Pacheco and copies were furnished to Bp. Gregorio and the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Antonio Franco, alleging that the root cause of the problems in the diocese was the 'personality defects of the Bishop.'[229]

Gregorio actually had tendered his resignation on February 1, 2000, but this was withdrawn because as he said without explaining 'so many events took place' after the supposed resignation.[230] The accusations and counter-accusations persisted to varying intensity and frequency. There was an attempt to forge a dialogue between the bishop and the clergy but after

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[226] Ibid.; Javellana interview, 04 April 2001.
[227] Ibid.; Saguinsin interview, 04 April 2001.
[228] Gregorio interview, 31 March 2001.
[229] 'An Open letter addressed to Msgr. Rodolfo Pacheco.' 24 February 2000. These 'personality defects' were not explained but the people, particularly the anti-Gregorio camp knew what these were. Silverio interview, 29 March 2001; Javellana interview, 04 April 2001.
[230] Carla P. Gomez, 'Bishop says he withdrew resignation,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 12 April 2000, 1 & 22.

the removal of Msgr Victorino Rivas as Vicar General and Fr. Gregorio Patiño as SAC Director, and a few others, hopes for unity were dashed. In April 2000, Bp. Gregorio finally made public his resignation citing health as the main reason. Gregorio admitted later was that it was the Apostolic Nuncio who prompted him to resign.[231] It was clear, nonetheless, that while the bishop was supported by some clergy and LOMAS members in general, he did not enjoy any more the confidence of many of the clergy members and lay people. Moreover, the acute divide had deepened so much that healing could not be possible under the incumbent leadership.

The division did not stop with the news of Gregorio's imminent departure. Bp. Antonio Fortich, Msgr. Victorino Rivas, Fr. Gregorio Patiño and Fr. Renato Bebit received death threats on April 28, 2000 prompting a new round of conflict in an already deeply divided diocese.[232] After this incident, the conflict started to stabilise as calls for a united Church intensified from within and without. Bp. Gregorio finally left the diocese for Cebu in January 2001, but the wounds of division lingered on even while this research was being undertaken. Bishop Vicente Navarra, Bishop of Kabankalan, became the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Bacolod on September 2, 2000. The following year, he was installed as the fifth Bishop of Bacolod diocese.

The internal rift in the diocese, especially at its peak, dealt a severe blow to the Church's capacity as an actor in democratisation. Unlike the Diocese of Malaybalay whose three post-Vatican II bishops maintained similar ecclesiological understanding and practice, (e.g., lay empowerment, BECs, social justice), the vision and leadership styles of the two post-Vatican II bishops in the Diocese of Bacolod differed sharply and to some extent opposed to each other. Although the diocese as a whole did not completely demobilise, much of the time and energy

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[231] Carla P. Gomez, 'Bishop opts to leave, says it's for the good of all,' *The Visayan Daily Star*, 14 April 2000, 1.

[232] Hanah A. Papasin, 'Fortich, 3 priests get death threats,' *Sun Star Daily –Bacolod*, 29 April 2000, 1 & 6.

spent by the whole local Church was given to internal squabbles. The ecclesiological thrusts represented by Bp. Emeritus Fortich and Bp. Gregorio were competing when they could have complemented with each other: emphasis on peace and justice versus spiritual formation; BECs versus LOMAS; lay empowerment versus consolidation of hierarchical authority. There was very little constructive interaction between Bp. Gregorio and those who were in key positions of influence particularly the Vicar General, the BEC Coordinator and the SAC Director. Although they were replaced, the ones who occupied the positions did not have the support of the other members of the clergy and therefore they were immensely handicapped in such a situation. Given the acute internal rift within the Church, not only was the hierarchy-laity interaction impaired, but the church-civil society nexus was also fragmented. While there was still some commitment to partnership, the Church's engagement with civil society was not workable in the long run. Nonetheless, there were a few attempts to forge a creative interaction between the Church leadership and local communities. Some exceptionally successful cases are the relocation of Sincang residents (earlier discussed) and their response to a few of the national issues that supported the nation's fragile democracy.

6.8 Confronting national issues: a passive-aggressive stance?

Like the Diocese of Malaybalay, the Diocese of Bacolod was not limited to tackling political issues within its jurisdiction. It was involved to varying degrees in a number of national issues which threatened democratic space gained in 1986. These issues included the national elections of 1992 and 1998, the anti-charter change campaign in 1997 and 1999, the anti-VFA position and to a limited extent the political mobilisation during the Estrada crisis. The internal conflict that was gradually crippling the diocese factored in its partial demobilisation in confronting some of these national issues.

6.8.1 Electoral reform campaign: PPCRV in the diocese

PPCRV officers and volunteers were products of the NAMFREL operation in the 1986 snap polls.[233] Bp. Fortich was then the Provincial Coordinator of NAMFREL in Negros. Prior to the elections in May of 1992, the couple Ignacio and Silvia Javellana made initial contact with the PPCRV in Manila. The San Antonio Abad Parish, where the couple belonged, decided to spearhead the PPCRV campaign, since a few of their lay leaders were also involved as NAMFREL volunteers in the 1986 elections. San Antonio Abad parish was the leading group in Bacolod's PPCRV, although the vicariates of Silay, Bacolod South, and Bacolod North were equally active.[234] Bacolod Diocese had some 3,000 volunteers covering some 70% to 80% of the total number of parishes.[235] Like in the Malaybalay diocese experience, NASSA's VOTE-CARE through SAC came later than PPCRV so the diocese decided to use the latter as the organisational base while the former provided financial support for their operation.[236] The volunteers were registered as members of both PPCRV and VOTE-CARE. Fr. Pedro V. Hiponia and Fr. Tomas E. Rito coordinated the whole operation. The main tasks included voters education through the weekly radio programme, candidates forum where those seeking public offices could present their programmes, recruitment of volunteers and conducting training seminars in preparation for the elections, sanitising the voters' registration list, voters assistance during election day, poll watching and in some cases assisting the members of the election board that supervised the electoral proceeding at the precinct level.[237]

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[233] Interview with Teodora S. Cabilso and Gloria A. Melocoton, PPCRV Officers, Diocese of Bacolod, 18 March 2001.
[234] Ibid.
[235] Rito interview, 03 March 2001; PPCRV, 'Faith and fire....' Cabilso and Melocoton estimate some 60% to 70% coverage of PPCRV in the 1992 elections in the Diocese of Bacolod (Cabilso and Melocoton interview, 18 March 2001).
[236] Rito interview, 03 March 2001.
[237] Ibid.; Cabilso and Melocoton interview, 18 March 2001.

NAMFREL's OQC did not have many volunteers. Notwithstanding some frictions between NAMFREL and PPCRV, the two struck a deal that on election day at 3.00 pm, the beginning of counting: the PPCRV volunteers would automatically become NAMFREL members.[238] Indeed the volunteers had two identification cards, one side was PPCRV and the other was NAMFREL. Simply by switching their identification cards in time for poll canvassing and OQC, the PPCRV volunteers became NAMFREL volunteers.[239]

The 1992 elections, the first presidential elections in the post-authoritarian period, were generally peaceful, although there were some reports of vote buying.[240] Unlike in the Diocese of Malaybalay where practically all major elements of the local Church participated in the electoral reform, the Left and the BECs in the Diocese of Bacolod, for the most part, boycotted the elections, or at the very least they were not enthusiastic about this electoral exercise as some did not believe that the elections could transform Philippine society.[241] By not participating in the electoral exercise, the BECs forfeited their potential contribution to the advancement of democratisation, however imperfect it was.

In the local elections of 1995, like many local Churches in the Philippines, the diocese was not mobilised. In 1998, however, the diocese was able to recruit 6,023 volunteers more than twice the number of recruits in the 1992 elections.[242] The BECs this time were involved in the PPCRV campaign. In the 1998 elections, the diocese was much more involved and organised.[243] In the reports given by PPCRV Coordinators, a number of polling places were covered 100% by

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[238] Rito interview, 03 March 2001.
[239] Ibid.; Cabilso and Melocoton interview, 18 March 2001.
[240] Rito interview, 03 March 2001.
[241] Interview with Fr. Gregorio Q. Patiño, Former Social Action Director, Diocese of Bacolod, 02 March 2001; Interview with Ignacio Javellana and Silvia Javellana, Lay leaders of San Antonio Abad Parish, Diocese of Bacolod, 04 April 2001.
[242] PPCRV, Report of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) to the Commission on Elections and to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the conduct of the May 11, 1998 National and Local Elections.
[243] Rito interview, 03 March 2001; Javellana and Javellana interview, 04 April 2001.

PPCRV volunteers.[244] The lowest estimate of PPCRV coverage in one polling place was 80% of precincts.[245] Once again PPCRV led the pre-election and election day events, while NAMFREL maintained its OQC.[246]

The presence and involvement of PPCRV made some difference in the conduct of the elections. PPCRV volunteers monitored and kept a watchful eye on the electoral paraphernalia upon their arrival.[247] The voters' education, presence and participation of PPCRV volunteers during and after casting of votes minimised potential rigging of elections. In many cases, the volunteers' knowledge of electoral canvassing proved to be helpful to the election board, a good number of whom were not familiar with the electoral code.[248] In one polling precinct in Bago City, the PPCRV volunteers took over the task of the election board because of confusion.[249] In the town of Don Salvador Benedicto, the PPCRV volunteers were able to lobby for the transfer of one election officer whose neutrality was suspect in favour of the incumbent local officials.[250] In another incident, PPCRV organiser Gloria A. Melocoton daringly blocked a vehicle loaded with about 30 would-be illegal voters at Andres Bonifacio Elementary School in the central vicariate of the diocese.[251] This was a classic case of *hakot*, that is, herding people with the intention of making them vote illegally. The electoral code prohibits *hakot*. With the help of the police, the crowd was dispersed. These are a few instances that demonstrate that indeed PPCRV made a difference in the 1998 elections, although reports of *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving), vote buying and a few electoral anomalies persisted during the elections.[252]

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[244] 'PPCRV Coordinators reports on the 1998 elections,' Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, n.d.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Rito interview, 03 March 2001.
[247] Javellana and Javellana interview, 26 March 2001.
[248] Ibid.; Cabilso and Melocoton interview, 19 March 2001.
[249] Rito interview, 03 March 2001.
[250] Cabilso and Melocoton interview, 19 March 2001.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Ibid.

PPCRV and NAMFREL partnership saw action in the 1992 and 1998 elections, notwithstanding some minor personal frictions among their leaders. This, to some extent, occurred at the national level and was reflected in the Diocese of Bacolod. This was virtually averted in the Diocese of Malaybalay owing to the leadership of Fr. Medardo Estaniel in both electoral movements. As in the experience of Bukidnon, PPCRV handled the voters' education programme, recruitment of volunteers, candidates' covenant signing, sanitising of voters' registration list, pollwatching, assistance during the election day including NAMFREL's OQC.

PPCRV's campaign in 1992 and 1998 had the blessing and support of Bp. Gregorio. The CBCP collectively endorsed church involvement in these electoral exercises through its pastoral letters. The CBCP endorsement was equally matched with concrete programmes as spearheaded by PPCRV and VOTE-CARE, and other church-based electoral groups. As early as February, following the lead of CBCP, Bp. Gregorio urged the faithful to support the campaign for 'an enlightened, peaceful, orderly, free and honest election' by praying and acting in preparation for the national and local elections in May.[253] A similar support was endorsed by the bishop in the 1995 and 1998 elections. Work, however, was entirely left to SAC and the PPCRV leaders.[254] Considering the internal rift that was already at work in the diocese, Bp. Gregorio's support was a welcome development, an indication that the local Church had not completely demobilised during his time. Unfortunately, the good beginning of citizenship education initiated by PPCRV was not pursued further. Citizenship education, an essential ingredient in democracy, was not exploited in ways that could have enhanced the citizenry's participation in good governance and in issues affecting the lives of ordinary people.

[253] Camilo D. Gregorio, Circular Letter No. 36, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, 27 February 1993.
[254] Cabilso and Melocoton interview, 19 March 2001.

6.8.2 Anti-charter change (*cha-cha*) campaigns

Like the Diocese of Malaybalay, the Diocese of Bacolod opposed two separate attempts to alter the 1987 constitution, although the second did not have much impact compared with the first. The first attempt in 1996 was the People's Initiative for Reform, Modernisation and Action (PIRMA) signature campaign with the support of high officials in the Executive and Legislative branches of the government. President Ramos, enjoying a relatively high approval rating from the public, was clearly ambivalent in his stance regarding *cha-cha* (charter change) until civil society groups and the Church made their opposition clear. The official statement of the Church, following the CBCP line, was issued on March 2, 1997 declaring that the underlying motive behind the *cha-cha* project was 'addiction to power.'[255] The statement proposed a three-pronged strategy to oppose the *cha-cha* campaign: information drive, mobilisation, and prayer assemblies.[256] The 5th Visayas Region Pastoral Assembly, to which Bacolod diocese belongs, rejected the *cha-cha* moves as 'arrogant ambition of certain legislators' to perpetuate self-serving power.[257] In the Diocese of Bacolod, Bp. Gregorio led the Church in opposing the bandwagon for *cha-cha* to enable President Ramos to run again for office as President. *Cha-cha* clearly endangered the already struggling democracy as this would open the possibility of perpetuating a politically entrenched presidency as in the case of President Marcos. When the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR) contemplated civil disobedience in February 1997, Gregorio was supportive of such a possibility 'only as a last recourse.'[258] 'I myself would march in the streets,' the bishop said.[259]

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[255] 'Addiction to power is the real issue behind Charter change moves—CBCP,' *The CBCP Monitor*, I(17), 31 August 1997, 12.
[256] 'Bacolod Bishops lead diocese in opposition to charter change,' *The CBCP Monitor*, I(4), 02 March 1997, 2.
[257] Vidal, 'Statement against charter change.'
[258] Julius D. Mariveles, 'Civil disobedience eyed by churchfolk,' *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 18 February 1997, 15.
[259] Ibid.

A prayer rally on March 26, 1997, Holy Thursday, aimed to parallel the commemoration of the 'Betrayal of Jesus' and the 'betrayal of public trust.'[260] 10,000 Negrenses, mostly middle class, attended the rally with other ministers of the PIC and Philippine Baptist Churches.[261] On September 21, marking the 25 years of the declaration of Martial Law, a prayer rally involving different Churches led by the Catholic Church, BAYAN and various civil society groups mobilised some 70,000 protesters.[262] Like strange bedfellows, Gregorio found himself marching in the streets with Leftist groups led by Raymundo Jarque, the army general-turned-rebel and NDF consultant in the peace talks.[263] By far, this was the biggest protest movement in Negros in the post-authoritarian period.

The second attempt to alter the 1987 constitution drew mixed reactions. In the planned Constitutional Correction for Development (CONCORD) of then President-elect Estrada, Bp. Gregorio seemed open to such a move arguing that 'the CBCP was not against Charter Change *per se* but Charter Change in the light that it would be used to extend the limits on the term of (presidential) office.'[264] Although this attempt appeared not to be connected with extending the term of presidential office, some economic inducements would have been unduly given to foreigners making investments in the country. CBCP President Archbishop Orlando B. Quevedo OMI opposed Estrada's charter change attempts. According to him, the principle that underpinned CONCORD was neo-liberal capitalism that marginalises the poor who were so

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[260] Nanette L. Guadalquiver, 'Church slates rally vs. charter change, *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 23 March 1997, 1 & 15.
[261] Julius D. Mariveles, '10,000 attend rally vs. charter change,' *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 31 March 1997, 2.
[262] Julius D. Mariveles and Avelyn Z. Agudon, '70,000 join prayer rally,' *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 22 September 1997, 1.
[263] Ibid., 4.
[264] Julius D. Mariveles, 'Gregorio defends Church stand on Cha cha,' *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, Bacolod City, 06 June 1998, 3.

often the obvious losers.[265] Thus while the CBCP statement opposed charter change, Gregorio believed that President-elect Estrada's CONCORD was not simply a 'whimsical move.'[266]

Among and between the Church and civil society groups, there were opposing views concerning the costs and benefits of Estrada's CONCORD. Unlike the first campaign against *cha-cha*, this greatly affected the unity of political actors.[267] Although some sectors of the Church and civil society groups pressed on with their opposition against the *cha-cha* attempt in 1999, it did not have the same impact as in the first campaign. The bishop of the diocese and some members of the clergy were visibly absent in the second anti-cha-cha campaign. Considering the bishop's close association with Estrada's key political backer Eduardo Cojuangco, and the sympathy of pro-Estrada clergy members, the Church leadership vacillated in its position with regard to the President's CONCORD.[268]

President Estrada, on the other hand, had a special regard for Negros Occidental and in particular, Bacolod City. Eduardo Cojuangco, his political godfather, has a huge landholding and political influence in the province. Bacolod City, with the support of the incumbent bishop and a number of clergy, was a source of his spiritual sustenance. His first thanksgiving Mass after being proclaimed winner in the 1998 elections was held at the St. Jude Thaddeus Parish, Alijis, Bacolod City, certainly a very historic occasion for the city.[269] President Estrada was a generous benefactor in the rebuilding of the parish church in Alijis. At the Mass, presided over by Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, Bp. Gregorio was the homilist. The overwhelming presence and support of bishops, clergy members and lay people in Negros showed that Estrada had a sizable contingent of support within the local Church, although some would fall out later. This in a way

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[265] Quevedo, 'No to constitutional change: a moral stand.'
[266] Mariveles, 'Gregorio defends Church stand on Cha cha,' 3.
[267] Villanueva interview, 09 March 2001.
[268] Saguinsin interview, 04 April 2001.
[269] *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, '12 Bishops, over 50 priests to officiate Estrada's bash,' 19 June 1998, 1 & 4.

factored in the hesitation of the Church's opposition against Estrada's CONCORD, and eventually in the movement to oust him as President. Estrada for his part, at least on two occasions during his presidency, visited Alijis to pray and draw some encouragement from his supporters.

The diocese's stance regarding the VFA was another repeat of their involvement in Estrada's CONCORD. The CBCP-NASSA and civil society leaders opposed the VFA as this was believed to be an affront to the sovereignty of the country.[270] SAC collaborated with the PIC leadership and civil society organisations such as Hugpong-Nationalist Alliance and BAYAN, but the hierarchy headed by the bishop kept silent on the issue.[271] Once again, the Church's involvement as a collective body was undermined by internal problems, and some ecclesial support for President Estrada.

6.8.3 Protest movement during the Estrada crisis

During 1999 until mid-2000, the Diocese of Bacolod turned inward, largely preoccupied with the internal rift that struck the local Church. The conflict did not end with Bp. Gregorio's announcement that he was stepping down, but persisted even after his departure in January 2001. Reeling from the internal division, the diocese tried to bounce back to get itself involved in the national crisis in the wake of Governor Chavit Singson's exposé linking President Estrada to corruption of unimaginable proportions. At this point, Bp. Navarra had already assumed governance of the See of Bacolod as the Apostolic Administrator while the diocese awaited its new bishop. Compounding the internal conflict was the support of many parish priests for

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[270] 'CBCP-NASSA, Statement against the VFA: a call to the Joint Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and on national Defense and Security to reject the VFA,' available from http://www.cbcp.net/nassa/liyab.html, 14 February 2001.
[271] Julius D. Mariveles, 'Junk the VFA movement launch today,' *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 31 August 1998, 1 & 10.

President Estrada.[272] Consequently, it was the civil society organisations that initiated and led the campaign seeking Estrada's resignation or ouster although church leadership and followers joined the campaign later.[273]

The Negros Occidental - Expel, Remove Actor President (NO-ERAP) fired its opening salvo of protests.[274] PsPN, the NGO that led the civil society protagonists in the peace zone advocacy, was the secretariat of this multi-sectoral organisation. NO-ERAP was chaired by Atty. Johnny Hagad through his son Atty. Andres Hagad. Both were former legal aid lawyers of the diocese. NO-ERAP was launched on October 18, 2000.[275] It called for a signature campaign demanding the resignation of President Estrada. Although key leaders of this group including Andres Hagad and Cesar Villanueva were members of the Christian Family Movement (CFM), an influential organisation within the diocese, the local Church as a whole was pre-occupied with the internal conflict.[276]

A bigger coalition, the Remove Estrada Movement, was organised comprising moderates (e.g., NO-ERAP) and leftist organisations (e.g., BAYAN and PCPR).[277] It led a massive mobilisation on October 25, 2000. Bishop Emeritus Fortich urged the faithful to join the anti-Estrada rally, without personally asking for Estrada's resignation.[278] Some 10,000 turned up for the rally which was organised in just three days.[279] Another rally of 8,000 people was staged on November 5 by the Remove Estrada Movement.[280] In Negros, civil society forces led the campaign for the resignation of President Estrada, although the local Church came much later in

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[272] Saguinsin interview, 04 April 2001; Interview with Atty. Andres, Chairperson, NO-ERAP (Negros Occidental – Expel, Remove Actor President) and Former legal counsel of the Legal Aid Office, Diocese of Bacolod, Bacolod City, 07 March 2001.
[273] Ibid.; Villanueva interview, 09 March 2001.
[274] *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 'NO-ERAP launched; to stage rally today,' 18 October 2000, 1 & 4.
[275] Ibid.
[276] Villanueva interview, 09 March 2001.
[277] Hannah A. Papasin, 'Repeat EDSA, Remove Erap Movement calls,' *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 26 October 2000, 1 & 4.
[278] Hannah A. Papasin, ' Fortich softens stand on Erap,' *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 13 December 2000, 1 & 6.
[279] Papasin, 'Repeat EDSA, 'Remove Erap movement calls.'
[280] Hannah A. Papasin, 'Erap resign now!' *Sun StarDaily – Bacolod*, 06 November 2000, 1 & 6.

the campaign. As in the Diocese of Malaybalay, no counter-mobilisation on the part of the pro-Estrada supporters was organised in the Diocese of Bacolod, despite the presence of a good number of people loyal to the President.

The official leadership of the Diocese of Bacolod, that is, Bp Navarra and the clergy members, issued belatedly a statement on the first Sunday of December asking for the resignation of the President, although many parish priests and lay people remained supportive of President Estrada.[281] By then many local Churches in the Philippines had already made their own pronouncements seeking the resignation, impeachment and removal of President Estrada. The following Sunday, December 10, President Estrada visited St. Jude Thaddeus parish in Alijis, Bacolod City where his supporters gathered. Bp. Emeritus Fortich, who at this point, had not officially called for his resignation, presided over a Mass for 'enlightenment, reconciliation and peace.'[282] At this Mass, after being prompted by Fortich, Estrada made a surprise move by releasing political prisoners, most of whom were from the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), the armed sector of the CPP-breakaway *Rebolusyonaryong Partido Manggagawa – Pilipinas* (RPM-P, Revolutionary Labour Party – Philippines), and commuting the death sentence of prisoners on death row.[283] Clearly this gesture was a way of appeasing the RPM-P group and the Catholic Church's clamour for his resignation, but it did not succeed. On the same day that President Estrada visited Bacolod City, the government signed a peace deal with RPM-P-RPA-ABB. The signing ceremony took place in the town of Don Salvador Benedicto, a political bailiwick of Eduardo Cojuangco. This raised suspicion that Cojuangco brokered the peace deal.[284] Peace advocates criticised the deal for its haste and lack

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[281] Hagad interview, 07 March 2001.
[282] *Sun Star Daily – Bacolod*, 'Turn to God, Fortich calls,' 11 December 2000, 1 & 6.
[283] Ibid.
[284] Alcuin Papa and Carla P. Gomez, 'Hopes high for Negros Peace,' *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 24 September 2001, 4.

of consultation and participation by all the stakeholders of peace.[285] Critics called for a re-negotiation of the peace deal. In the post-Estrada period, with the resignation of Bp. Navarra from the peace panel, the Church challenged the credibility of the agreement, but nevertheless the Macapagal-Arroyo administration supported it.

On the eve of January 1, 2001, Bp. Emeritus Fortich was invited by President Estrada to Malacañang Palace, hoping to get the former's support. Bp. Fortich claimed that he did not know what the invitation was all about.[286] He along with Manila Auxiliary Bishop Teodoro Bacani, believed to be an Estrada sympathiser, led a Mass with the president. There at the Presidential Palace, Fortich, in his personal conversation with Estrada, asked him to resign.[287] When the impeachment trial resumed in January, Fortich officially went public and asked for the resignation of the President.

The internal division in the Diocese of Bacolod was a salient antecedent causing the local Church to disengage, partially anyway, from national issues. Nonetheless, the Bacolod diocese was still involved in the electoral reform through PPCRV and its partnership with NAMFREL, despite BECs' boycott movement in the 1992 elections; the first anti-Charter change during the time of President Ramos, but not during the time of President Estrada; and the campaign for the impeachment, resignation, and ouster of President Estrada, although the local Church came late to this movement. The alliance of Bp. Gregorio and many of the clergy members with the Estrada administration made it difficult to advocate the second anti-Charter change movement and to join the campaign to remove Estrada as President of the Republic.

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[285] Ibid., Villanueva interview, 09 March 2001.
[286] Fortich interview, 03 March 2001.
[287] Ibid.

9. Conclusion

The Bacolod diocese nearly fits the model of post-authoritarian demobilisation of many local Latin American Churches as characterised by some writers.[288] Hannah Stewart-Gambino, for instance, in her analysis explains three factors that put in context the involvement of the Churches: the democratic context following the collapse of authoritarian regimes, the restoration of neo-conservatism evidently seen in the appointment of conservative prelates, and the rise of Pentecostal communities.[289] These factors would appear to be reflected in the Diocese of Bacolod. However, in addition to Stewart-Gambino's reading, the decline of the Left profoundly affected the Church's political engagement. After President Aquino catapulted to power, people adopted a 'wait-and-see' attitude while many activists abandoned their ideological projects. The appointment of Bp. Gregorio as bishop of Bacolod, seen by some as a lobby of the conservative Papal Nuncio Archbishop Bruno Torpigliani,[290] also reflected the general preference of the Vatican with regard to politically active local Churches in Latin America.[291] The proliferation too of fundamentalist groups in Negros, equivalent to the Pentecostal communities in Latin America indirectly shaped the public role of the local Church. Owing to the rise of fundamentalist groups, the LOMAS particularly the renewal and charismatic organisations became a counterforce that held at bay the advances of the former.

The tale of Bacolod diocese strengthens the three basic arguments set out in this thesis. The first argues that the local Church's strengths or weaknesses as a democratic actor hinge upon hierarchy and laity interaction (church *ad intra*). Within these two entities are disparate actors

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[288] Scott Mainwaring, 'Grass-roots Catholic groups and politics in Brazil,' in *Born of the poor*, ed. Edward Cleary, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 143-167; Drogus, 'The Rise and decline of liberation theology....

[289] Hannah Stewart-Gambino, 'Introduction....'

[290] O'Brien interview, 16 July 2002; Saguinsin interview, 04 April 2001.

(individual and collective) with varying pastoral approaches and doctrinal proclivities that at times were opposed to each other. With the ascendancy of Bp. Gregorio, changes in pastoral priorities and directions became apparent. He preferred the traditional and charismatic LOMAS to the politicised BECs. Restoring the lines of authority seemed more important to him than lay empowerment and participation. Bp. Gregorio reined in social and political involvement and focused on spiritual training of the renewal communities. Gregorio's close alliance with the rich members of the renewal communities and with business magnate Eduardo Cojuangco, and Fortich's commitment to peace and justice betrayed clashing class interests within the local Church. The tensions in the hierarchy were also reflected in the laity, between the LOMAS and politicised BECs. Taken altogether, this often made consensus building a complex task. Despite the changing ecclesial and political landscapes, there are some indications that the local Church was still engaged in democracy building, albeit uneven in terms of influence and outcome. Particularly when the internal rifts were not yet acute and when they collaborated with civil society organisations, the local Church remained a critical actor in the defence of democracy and advancement of citizenship awareness and practice. This is evident in the way the Church supported peace education and the peace zone, the relocation of Sincang residents, the first anti-Charter change movement and electoral reform. Although there were already signs of division in the diocese (particularly during the peace campaign), hierarchy-laity interaction increased the organisational capacity of the local Church to engage the State and society. In these cases, it was not only the hierarchical leadership or the local communities by themselves, but the persistent interaction between the two that enhanced lay participation, built a broad consensus on issues, and represented and articulated interest pertaining to common welfare (e.g., peace, community relocation, electoral involvement). Thus the Church's influence and impact was relatively far-reaching.

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[291] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America*, 13-14.

Nevertheless, the diocese had to endure a flawed church *ad intra* interaction and consequently a fragmented partnership with civil society during the moments of internal division. This deeply divided hierarchical leadership adversely affected the capacity and influence of the Church as a religio-political actor. This was quite evident in the Presbyteral meetings, the handling of the military Operation Thunderbolt evacuees in 1989, and the attempt at local Church renewal in the Diocesan Pastoral Congress in 1993. The internal conflict was also manifest in the following campaigns: the second anti-Charter change, anti-VFA, and the resignation and ouster movement against President Estrada. Bp. Gregorio's close association with Eduardo Cojuangco, and his support for President Estrada weakened the resolve of the diocese to defend and build democracy. In the case of the ouster of President Estrada, the support of many clergy members and lay people together with the internal division in the local Church undermined the role of the Church as an agent in democratisation. These instances demonstrated deep cleavages within and between the leaders and members of the Church. Although some elements of the Church were still visibly engaged, its alliance with civil society was weak. The latter took the lead in these advocacies. As a result of this fractured church leadership and membership, the quality of mobilisation and participation of the people declined considerably.

The internal division with the local Church was a gradual event. In the early period when the division was not serious, the Diocese of Bacolod managed to help construct a level of citizenship which was linked to peace issues, human rights, primacy of the law, electoral reform practices, and the anti-charter change campaign during the time of Ramos. At their peak, the internal rifts drastically reduced the Bacolod's diocese's capacity as a democratic actor. By contrast, the Diocese of Malaybalay enjoyed relative cohesion after two moderate bishops (Bp. Rosales and Bp. Pacana) took charge of the see from Bp. Claver. These two bishops basically pursued but modified when necessary the ecclesiological thrust of Bp. Claver. In the Diocese of

Bacolod, church *ad intra* was much more complex than in the Diocese of Malaybalay. Both the hierarchical leadership and lay people were much more fragmented and deeply divided in the former than in the latter. On this score, the role of the hierarchical leadership in the Diocese of Malaybalay was of paramount importance.

The second argument asserts that the capacity of the Church as a democratic actor increases if it interacts positively (mobilises, animates, creates partnership) with civil society (church *ad extra*). As indicated in the foregoing, a strong hierarchy-laity linkage improved the condition for church-civil society linkage. Conversely a flawed church *ad intra* condition undermined the capacity of the Church to engage civil society. In the Diocese of Bacolod, this church-civil society interaction was a potent force in enhancing people's participation, meaningful interest articulation and representation. This partnership saw action during the peace campaign (with PsPN, PEZAN, etc), first anti-Charter change (with BAYAN, etc.), electoral reform (with NAMFREL), human rights advocacy (with FLAG) and so on. Like the experience in Bukidnon, these ties evolved during the democratic transition period and based on mutually shared interest in democratisation. NAMFREL, PsPN, PEZAN, Pax Christi, and other civil society organisations saw the Church as an ally in the task of democratisation. They had come to trust the Church in this regard. The Church likewise had immense influence and in these organisations had key leaders who subscribed to the Catholic social teaching. Church-civil society relationship along with hierarchy-laity linkage had a particular focus in democracy building. The formation of a new citizenry with a profound sense of public engagement was the most important political outcome in the Diocese of Bacolod, as in the Diocese of Malaybalay.

The final argument consists of the most important contribution of the Diocese of Bacolod in democratisation: strengthening citizenship. Citizenship has many faces in Negros. Firstly, citizenship was rooted in the people's struggle for peace. Owing to the prominence of retired bishop Fortich, the citizenry's clamour for peace, and the vibrancy of civil society organisations,

this was one of the first provincial peace initiatives in the country. The various peace education programmes during the National Eucharistic Year (1986-1987), the Peace Caravan, support for Cantomanyog's bid to become a peace zone, and other peace initiatives defined a constituency of peace advocates in Negros. These peace efforts are in a way small representations of the peace initiatives of local Churches in Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Chiapas in Mexico.[292] In these instances, the Church acted as 'a mediator, moderator or mentor of democracy' as Cleary speaks of the Latin American Churches.[293]

By promoting peace, the Diocese of Bacolod tried to facilitate a favourable political climate for democracy building. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stephan argue that for democracy to be regarded as consolidated, the significant actors must desist from turning to violent means to challenge the State or to create a non-democratic regime; public opinion should foster the primacy of democratic procedures and institutions; and the influential actors, whether government or non-government, ought to 'become subjected to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflict within the specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by the new democratic process.'[294] This is akin to Rustow's 'habituation phase,' a moment when political actors adopt democratic rules.[295] Burton, Gunther, and Higley similarly argue that democracy is not consolidated where the significant actors do not accept 'established political institutions and adhere to democratic rules of the game.'[296] In this direction, the Diocese of Bacolod along with the civil society movement tried to enable the actors to accept the democratic institutions and

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[292] Jeffrey Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships and democracy in Latin America,* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 9. See also Edward L. Cleary, 'Conclusion: politics and religion,' in *Conflict and competition: the Latin American Church in a changing environment,* ed. Edward L. Cleary and Hannah Stewart-Gambino (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 204.
[293] Cleary, 'Conclusion....,' 204.
[294] Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stephan, *Problems of democratic transition and consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and post-communist Europe* (London: The John Hopkins Press), 6.
[295] Rustow, 'Transition to democracy,' 337-63.
[296] Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley, 'Introduction: elite transformations and democratic regimes,' in *Elites and democratic consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 3.

processes in resolving competing interests. Its work on legal contestations, human rights education, use of judicial processes, support for the fragile electoral system, defence against attempts (the first more than the second) to change the democratic Charter are clear indications of its commitment to make democracy work.

Peace advocacy had a way of fashioning engaged citizenship. The people who participated in the peace advocacy ceased to be merely inhabitants of the land and became informed citizens who had as much stake in peace issues as the government and the armed groups. The peace movement rejected military action and armed rebellion as solutions to poverty and underdevelopment. To illustrate this point, Cantomanyog was declared a peace zone. This was made possible largely because of the people's sustained efforts, but at the same time this was supported by the Church and civil society. Beyond the declaration of Cantomanyog as a zone of peace, the community was able to embark on development and livelihood projects, aided by external funding and technical assistance. Peace for Cantomanyog meant not only the absence of war, but also the inclusion of participatory development.

If the Bukidnon Church can boast of its environmental constituency, the Negros Church's claim to fame is its peace constituency. In both cases, the local Churches through the BCC/BECs were decidedly crucial actors in constructing citizenship making rights not simply individual entitlements, but collective claims. Citizenship in this sense does not only concern civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights, but includes environmental and peace rights.

The downside, however, was that the Cantomanyog peace zone was not replicated nor did it influence the other peace zones in the country which sprang up. Moreover, despite the advocacy for peace, the advocates were not successful in stopping the war in Negros and bringing the armed groups back to the negotiating table. Finally, sustaining the momentum of this peace constituency is a complex task. After the breakdown of the government-NDF peace efforts, the peace constituency receded from the public arena.

Secondly, citizenship was strengthened in the local Church's commitment to human rights. Like the legal advocacy in the Malaybalay diocese, Bacolod's LAO was committed to provide para-legal training seminars, to protect people from illegal detention and to represent the poor in judicial cases. This in some sense helped the ordinary people rediscover their rights as citizens, individually and collectively. LAO represented the poor in civil and criminal cases, and with FLAG, handled strictly political cases. The local Church, through LAO and SAC, was a key player in the broadening of the concept of human rights violations to include the right to development. The local Church's involvement (legal contestation and out of court settlement) in the relocation of Sincang residents affirmed this right as a fundamental one. In a way, legal advocacy tried to reinforce the primacy of law (particularly when it protected fundamental rights) and the courts as the arbiter of justice, although many a court decision was skewed to favour the propertied and powerful. By making the courts accessible to the poor, it attempted to reinvent the justice system, where the poor participated. Through human rights education and advocacy, a new mode of citizenship emerged in Negros. The people became more aware of their rights, and they exercised these freely. As they opened themselves to legal contestations, somehow they were restoring public confidence in the legal and justice system, whose respectability was greatly tainted during the authoritarian period. In this way, institutional arrangements and the primacy of law strengthened the democratic current as has been argued by many writers.[297]

The role of the Church as a defender of human rights stands out as an important contribution to citizenship strengthening in Latin America. The Vicariate of Solidarity (Chile), *Tutela Legal* [Legal Defence] (El Salvador), Commission of Peace and Justice (São Paulo), Justice and Peace Service (Uruguay), Commission for the Defense of Human Rights and the

Construction of Peace (Peru) are some of the many well-known church establishments and organisations of human rights.[298] Although smaller in scope, Bacolod's LAO, like Malaybalay's legal aid unit, comes close to the experience of El Salvador's *Tutela Legal* where cases of disappearance, torture and human rights violations were investigated.

Thirdly, engaged citizenship saw action in the local Church's involvement to strengthen the electoral system in the 1992 and 1998 elections. The electoral system is a key democratic institution which must have the confidence and respect of the citizenry for democracy to work. Like the Diocese of Malaybalay and many local Churches in the Philippines, a renewed sense of citizenship figured in the Church's involvement in the post-authoritarian elections. Bacolod's PPCRV's role in the 1992 and 1998 presidential and local elections brought about a heightened sense of participation in the electoral exercise. Prior to election day, voters' education, cleansing of voters' registration list, mobilising people to vote, and recruitment of volunteers were important pre-election programmes undertaken by PPCRV. PPCRV volunteers averted some potential rigging of elections, chaos in the voting precincts, and ensured peaceful and honest conduct of the elections. Although there were still reports about vote-buying and cheating, PPCRV's contribution to democracy strengthening was rebuilding the public trust in the electoral system which was hugely degraded during the authoritarian period. It is unfortunate, however, that like the Diocese of Malaybalay and the Churches nationwide generally, no follow up was undertaken to pursue the initial citizenship education began by PPCRV with the support of VOTE-CARE.

Finally, citizenship was quite pronounced in the people's struggle to defend their Constitution from alterations that would have reduced greatly its democratic features. The Diocese of Bacolod's role in democratisation was visible in the first anti-*Cha-cha* campaign

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[297] Mendez, O'Donnell and Sérgio, *The (Un)Rule of law and the underprivileged in Latin America*; Elizabeth and Hershberg, *Constructing democracy: human rights, citizenship, and society in Latin America.*

during the time of President Ramos. The Church mobilised alongside elements in the NDF and civil society to launch the biggest post-authoritarian protest movement in Negros. The Bacolod diocese added to the strong national clamour resisting the extension of the presidential term to enable President Ramos to run again for office as this would open the way to a deeply entrenched and powerful presidency.

A major difficulty though in the Diocese of Bacolod's practice of citizenship, as in the Diocese of Malaybalay, is sustaining its appeal and making it effective beyond confronting the issues (e.g., armed conflict, electoral exercise, Charter change, etc). Making citizenship happen in everyday life appears to be a challenge for the Church in a democratizing polity. However, a strong, effective and competent citizenship needs an equally strong and responsive state.

[298] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America.*

Chapter Seven

Conclusion: The Philippine Catholic Church - against political tyranny or genuinely for democracy?

> *We knew what we were against, and we opposed that fairly effectively. It is not nearly so easy to say what we are for and so we appear to be dithering, not quite knowing where we want to go nor how to get there.* Archbishop Desmond Tutu[1]

In speaking of the mainline African Churches vis-à-vis democratisation above, Archbishop Desmond Tutu seems to summarise a prevailing impression of the Church's involvement in the transition to democracy and a continuing search for direction in the post-authoritarian milieu.[2] The Church in many instances, particularly its moderate and progressive elements, demonstrated its capacity to oppose authoritarian regimes, but there appears to be an ambiguity in its position in the newly found democratic space. The African Church literature seems to suggest that while many Churches were *against political tyranny*, it needs to be convincingly demonstrated that they are *for democracy* particularly in the post-authoritarian period.[3] This thinking is also reflected in the literature on Latin American[4] and Eastern European Churches,[5] albeit with some marked differences. This is the crux of the puzzle on which this study attempted to shed light using the experience of the Philippine Catholic Church in general and the two local Churches in particular. Does the Church have a role to play in building post-authoritarian democracy? If so, in what ways?

A few concepts are vital in this study. As stated in Chapter One, the Church (primarily denoting Roman Catholic confession) in its entirety including its organisations is a supra-state organisation in that it goes beyond the State and interacts with its own set of ecclesial laws and

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[1] Kassimir, 'The Social power of religious organisation and civil society...,' 77.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ranger, 'Conference summary and conclusion,' 22; see also Gifford, *The Christian Churches and the democratisation of Africa.*
[4] Cleary and Stewart-Gambino, *Competition and conflict...*; Daudelin and Hewitt, 'The Church and politics in Latin America.'
[5] Eberts, 'The Catholic Church and democracy in Poland;' Pedro Ramet, ed., *Eastern Christianity and politics in the twentieth century*, Vol. I, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988).

norms (institutions). The Church is a body of baptised Catholics (hierarchy and laity), with its own formalised regulations, sources of religious meaning and identity, and an internal structure of proceeding encompassing the Vatican leadership and the lowest ecclesial unit in a village. The local Church is the diocese, led by a resident bishop and assisted by his priests. Although the Church is distinct from civil society by virtue of its supra-state character, individual church organisations operate between the State and households, and as such are part of civil society. This is an ambiguity in the Church's relationship with civil society, a fuzzy overlap that continues to be unresolved in the literature.

Democracy and democratisation are related concepts employed in this study. Following Diamond's pluralist notion of democracy, three conditions are required: 1) the primacy of elected civilian authority over non-elected authorities such as the military, 2) accountability (vertically or horizontally) of elected or non-elected government officials, and 3) the participation of civil society actors in a pluralistic society.[6] Engaged citizenship is viewed as a vital ingredient in democracy building. Citizenship is used in this context not only as a status arising from one's membership in a polity, but concerns active participation, the exercise of rights (individual and group) and responsibilities in a deliberative process.

This chapter summarises main findings, underscores key issues arising from these findings, and illustrates their implications for the Church as a democratic actor. This is done in four parts: a presentation of the theoretical construct based on the church-democracy literature, a review of the Philippine Catholic Church's main lines of involvement, a comparative analysis of the two local Churches examined in Chapters Five and Six, and a brief discussion of the implications of the research for an understanding of the Catholic Church in the Philippines.

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[6] Diamond, *Developing democracy toward consolidation*, 10-11.

7.1 The Church and democracy: towards a theoretical framework of compatibility

The relationship between the Catholic Church and democracy is at once an ancient and recent academic interest. Alexis de Tocqueville's observations in the 1830s about one of the most democratic countries in the world (viz., United States) attempted to show the potential compatibility between Catholicism and democracy, although the depoliticised theological framework (e.g., priest-centred governance, dichotomised body-soul spirituality) that underpinned his thinking was a product of his time.[7] The Tocqueviallian position connecting Catholicism and democracy has partially been eclipsed in the literature over the years. Following Max Weber's classic thesis that Catholics (more than Protestants) tend to be pre-occupied with eternal life and less engaged in capital accumulation, by extension, Catholicism was held suspect and deemed incompatible with capitalism and the whole project of democratisation.[8] In addition, with the advent of secularisation theory in the 1950s and 1960s which when followed to the hilt, stipulates the weakening of religion in the face of modernisation, Christianity appeared morally and politically a spent force.[9] The Weberian thesis and the secularisation theory have, however, attracted a flurry of criticisms in the wake of the church renewal spawned by the celebration of Vatican II (1962-1965), the Papal Social Encyclicals (1891-1991), the Medellin Conference (1968) and the Puebla Conference (1979). From these developments sprang local theologies of lived experience: the CEBs in Latin America and the BCC/BECs in the Philippine context. Although Vatican II was a European initiative, Latin America as a region was first to appropriate it for its own context and construct a

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[7] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. I, 300, 308.
[8] Weber, *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*; Carlos Alberto Torres, *The Church, society, and hegemony: a critical sociology of religion in Latin America*, trans. Richard A. Young, Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1992), 27-37.
[9] Peter L. Berger, 'The Desecularization of the world: a global overview,' in *The Desecularization of the world: resurgent religion and world politics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 1-18.

theology which motivated people's struggle for an end to political tyranny and inaugurate a season of democracy.[10] Progressive political repression, evident in the rise of NSS ideology together with the reforms set out by Vatican II, led many local Churches in Latin America, Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and some parts of Southeast Asia to challenge the dictatorial and centralising tendencies of the State. Thus a renewed interest in the relations between the Church and democracy emerged in the wake of the reforms unleashed by Vatican II. The reforms set out by Vatican II, however, were uneven as ecclesiological cracks within the Church and contentious interpretations of church teachings (e.g., social justice, property rights) continue to cause internal contradictions. The Vatican's apparent predilection for conservative groups (e.g., Opus Dei), the ascendancy of right-wing prelates, and the struggle of politicised church actors to pursue the task of democratisation particularly in Latin America show marked contradictions within the Church in the post-authoritarian period. These tensions have invariably inhibited the Church's capacity as an actor in democratisation. To some extent, this is also evident in the narratives of the Philippine Church and the two local Churches.

The literature during the democratic transition views the Church, the moderate and progressive elements particularly and some conservatives, as a key actor in many cases in the struggle against authoritarianism in Latin America, Africa and some parts of Southeast Asia, and communism in Central and Eastern Europe (see Chapter Two). Still, beyond the transition, academic interest in the Church and democratisation appears to dwindle. A restored democracy raises new issues and therefore invites new strategies and roles for civil society actors such as the Church. The challenges are at once both externally-driven and internally-generated. In many cases, with the passing away of authoritarian and communist states, the Church leadership has restored the lines of central authority. In addition, the Pentecostal movement and fundamentalist groups have grown in strength and numbers, and the Socialist bloc in Europe has collapsed

[10] See Gustavo Guitiérez, *A Theology of liberation: history, politics, and salvation*, translated and edited,

causing the break up of political movements influenced by the Left. In the meantime, while many civil society actors are adapting to new lines of political engagement, others are diminishing. Democratic institutions and procedures are being reconstructed gradually and political parties despite their weaknesses are emerging. This is then the moment of 'institutionalised uncertainty in certain roles and policy areas' as Philippe C. Schmitter puts it.[11] Nonetheless, this also enables the citizens to participate in constructing a democratic project where democracy is 'the only game in town.'[12] The emergence of democratic institutions, however imperfect they may be, makes it possible for civil society organisations to grow, develop, expand, and take on new challenges. Therefore the Church can now hardly speak of itself as '*the* voice of the voiceless,' but simply one among many voices in a pluralistic and democratic society. By implication, the Church needs to redefine its roles in the public sphere, look through new lenses at its position vis-à-vis the State and society, and to engage with civil society organisations, its potential allies in the democratic enterprise.

The proposed framework in this study draws extensively from the democratic transition experiences of Latin American Churches whence similarities with the Philippine Catholic Church as well as their differences can be drawn. The seminal literature affirms the renewal of the Catholic Church beginning with Vatican II, and the shifts in the pastoral orientation of its hierarchical leadership that became more sympathetic to the current of political involvement in general.[13] Huntington's view on the third wave of democratisation,[14] and those who followed basically his line of thinking,[15] explicitly connect the role of the Catholic Church in bringing about democratic transition not only in Latin America, but around the globe with the exclusion

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Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1973).

[11] Philippe C. Schmitter, 'Interest systems and the consolidation of democracies,' In eds. G. Marks and Larry Diamond *Reexamining democracy: essays in honor of Seymour Martin Lipset.* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications), 1992, 158.

[12] Linz and Stephan, *Problems of democratic transition and consolidation...*, 5.

[13] See Vallier, *Catholicism, social control, and modernization in Latin America*; Sanders, 'The Church in Latin America.

[14] Huntington, *The Third wave.....*

[15] See Witte, *Christianity and democracy in global context*; Gruchy, *Christianity and democracy....*

of Africa which was then beginning its transition to democracy. The third wave democracies were said to be countries that transited from authoritarian and centralised regimes to democracies from the mid-1970s.[16] This transition was primarily a Catholic movement, Huntington asserts.[17] His treatment of the Church as an establishment, conventionally understood as mainly the hierarchy and its macro leadership, however, does not go far enough in presenting the complexity of the Church as an actor. Moreover, Huntington locates his analysis mainly during the transition period and only tangentially touches upon the post-authoritarian time.

Klaiber's socio-historical approach linking Churches and democracy in Latin America is cognizant of intra-church dynamics such as conservative-moderate-progressive cleavages, the various church organisations across the local-national-international divide and the issues affecting church-state relations.[18] Of the roles that the Church played in initiating and building democracy, the promotion of human rights and conflict resolution open up possibilities for analysing the Philippine Church's contributions in building democracy.[19] Klaiber, like Huntington, draws his data primarily from the transition period. Both focus their analysis on church-state relations, typical of many writers who limit their scope to the transition period and are largely concerned with the Church's hierarchical leadership. Gifford's collection of essays on Christian Churches in the democratisation of Africa, and Swatos' religion and democracy articles, except those that deal with the small Christian communities likewise suffer from the same constraints.[20]

A more thoroughgoing view of the Church as a unitary rational actor usually represented by the Episcopal leadership is shown by Gill.[21] He postulates that the pastoral strategies of the Church are many a time articulated by the hierarchical leadership upon whose pronouncements

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[16] Huntington, *The Third wave...*, 72.
[17] Ibid., 76.
[18] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships and democracy in Latin America.*
[19] Ibid., 6-11.
[20] Gifford, *The Christian Churches and the democratization of Africa.*
[21] Gill, *Rendering unto Caesar....*

the local communities ultimately rely for official backing.[22] Gill seems to view the Church as a monolithic and elite establishment, and plays down the input of local communities in informing the hierarchical leadership's pastoral intervention. A similar view of the Church as deeply hierarchical is found in Fleet and Smith's traditional understanding of the hierarchical nature of the Church.[23] This is conveniently expressed as 'the chain of command from pope to bishop to priest' as if the decision-making process were a unilateral action emanating from Rome down to the lowest member of the hierarchy.[24]

A differing interpretation of the Church as actor in democratisation looks at the primacy of CEBs or BECs as the 'popular subjects' with an 'ethic of public engagement' as Rowan Ireland likes to put it.[25] While not entirely dismissive of the importance of the hierarchical character of the Church, the CEBs connection with hierarchical interaction is not given sufficient attention. In a similar vein, Lehmann holds a very optimistic view of CEBs' positive roles in democratisation.[26] He refers to this movement as *basismo*,[27] which in his view is situated locally and with very little linkage with the hierarchical leadership.[28] Although many writers on CEBs see the importance of hierarchical support in general, the interaction between the two actors is not treated adequately.[29]

Briefly, apart from the changing socio-political and religious milieu in which the Church finds itself in the post-authoritarian regimes, much of the existing literature conceptualises the notion of the Church either in highly hierarchical constructs with minimal linkage with local

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[22] Ibid., 4-5.
[23] Fleet and Smith, Fleet and Smith, *The Catholic Church and democracy in Chile and Peru.*
[24] Ibid., 14-15.
[25] Ireland, 'Popular religion and the building of democracy in Latin America....;'
[26] Lehman, *Democracy and development in Latin America....*
[27] *Basismo* refers primarily to the activities of the *comunidades eclesiales de base* (CEBs).
[28] Ibid.; See also the works of Haynes in *Religion in third world politics...*; and *Religion and politics in Africa....*
[29] See Ireland, 'Popular religion and the building of democracy in Latin America....;' Hewitt, *Base Christian communities and social change in Brazil*, Mainwaring and Wilde, *The progressive Church in Latin America.*

communities[30] or largely in terms of lay communities with hardly any interaction with hierarchical leadership.[31] For analytical purposes, such distinctions may be important. However, if one were to look into the Church's capacity as a democratic protagonist, such linkage may not only be desirable, but necessary. The framework presented in the study tried to rectify this fragmented notion of the Church, often cast in terms of the hierarchical element and the grassroots movement as if they were, monolithic, separate and competing entities. Drawing on Mainwaring and Wilde's and Kassimir's concepts of the Church,[32] and on the Vatican II's 'people of God' ecclesiology,[33] the Church *ad intra* condition sees the continuous interaction within and between the hierarchical leadership and lay membership (see Chapter Two). The differences within and between the two parties in terms of gender, ethnicity and class, and their ecclesiological *cum* doctrinal tendencies necessitate the formation of a broad consensus to ensure a wide participation of church actors. To this end, church ad intra enhances a consolidated church position and action.

Fleet and Smith's analysis on the Church as political actor makes a distinction between democratic transition and consolidation in Chile and Peru.[34] This is an important analytical distinction to make: it is one thing to initiate democracy and quite another to sustain it in the long haul; a point which Beetham correctly stresses.[35] Their study has also drawn us to consider the complexity of the internal operations within the Church. They are fully aware of the potential of civil society organisations as allies of the Church's democratic project. This recognition fits in well with the concerns raised in this study. Still, they do not examine the Church's interaction with civil society sufficiently to understand their outcomes in strengthening democracy. Thus

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[30] See Huntington, *The third wave...*; Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America*; *Church and revolution....*
[31] Ireland, 'Popular religions and the building of democracy in Latin America...;' Lehmann, *Democracy and development in Latin America....*; Haynes, *Religion in the third world politics....*
[32] Mainwaring and Wilde, *The Progressive Church in Latin America*; Kassimir, 'The social power of religious organisation and civil society....'
[33] 'Dogmatic constitution on the Church,' 350-432.
[34] Fleet and Smith, *The Catholic Church and democracy in Chile and Peru.*
[35] Beetham, 'Problems of democratic consolidation,' 61.

church-civil society relations in the post-authoritarian period remain inadequately explored, and yet this could be a critical arena for analysing the Church's roles in enhancing democratisation, aside from the oft-used church-state relations dichotomy. A few authors have suggested that church-civil society linkage is an instructive lens for seeing lessons about the Church's roles in democracy building, but these have scarcely been dealt with in the post-authoritarian setting.[36]

The framework presented in this study seeks to look into church-civil society engagement as a way of looking at the Church's rightful place and potential role in a pluralistic post-authoritarian society. Three modes of interaction are proposed to characterise this relationship. The Church could mobilise (through its pronouncements and use of religious symbols), animate by virtue of its high public trust, and form creative partnership (through ties and shared interest in democratisation) with civil society in the task of democracy building. Thus the Church could likewise be mobilised, animated, and be challenged to seek alliance with civil society forces.

Although a few studies have been conducted to assess the Church's involvement in building democracy in the post-authoritarian period,[37] they have not sufficiently addressed church *ad intra* and *ad extra* dynamics and their explicit connection with citizenship. These two linkages are closely connected with each other as the Philippine experience itself attests. A strong hierarchy-laity interaction potentially offers church-civil society partnership, and vice versa. Conversely, a weak linkage between the hierarchy and the laity fragments the Church and loosens its partnership with civil society. Both church *ad intra* and *ad extra* widen the participatory space not only for the laity but also for non-church and non-state organisations (civil society). Both are enabling conditions especially for politically excluded local communities and groups that ordinarily have limited access for participation, interest articulation

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[36] See Gautier, 'Church elites and the restoration of civil society in communist societies in Central Europe,' Yun-Shik, 'The Progressive Christian Church in South Korea,' Kamrava and Mora, 'Civil society and democratisation in comparative perspective....'

[37] See Youngblood, 'Aquino and the Churches....'; Carroll, 'Church and state...'; Carroll, 'Civil society, Churches and the ouster of Erap; Casper, *Fragile democracies*....

and representation and political engagement. Both strengthen the pluralist and educational functions of civil society as proposed by Hadenius and Uggla.[38] The pluralist function consists of organising, networking, and forming groups to re-define power relations and thus engage the State and society in the interest of democracy building. Foley and Edwards describe the pluralist function as the associational and mobilisational aspects of civil society.[39] The function of association is derived from the Tocquevillian contention that the proliferation of organisations in society correlates positively with democracy. The art of association, de Tocqueville argues, is the 'mother of action.'[40] By implication, this involves interest articulation and political participation, a critical element in a democratic regime. The function of mobilisation is drawn from the social movement theorists' idea that unless there are political opportunities facing the movement, mobilising structures that enable coordinated actions and collective meanings and identities, social movements are unlikely to emerge and develop.[41]

The educational function of the Church is not explicitly developed in Hadenius and Uggla, although they seem to imply that it is connected with engaged citizenship.[42] Citizenship, however, is multifaceted and its outcomes are manifold. The framework proposed in this study views citizenship as a unifying theme of the pluralist and educational functions of the Church along with civil society (See Figure 3 on p. 54). Engaged citizenship is exercised in various arenas which either make or break democracy (e.g., electoral reform, interest articulation and representation, good governance, human rights and democratic culture). The Philippine Church's involvement and participation in these arenas were scrutinised in the national and local spheres.

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[38] Hadenius and Uggla, 'Making civil society work,...'
[39] Foley and Edwards, 'The Paradox of civil society.'
[40] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II, 117.
[41] McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 'Introduction....,' 2-7.
[42] Hadenius and Uggla, 'Making civil society work...,' 129.

7.2 The Philippine Church: a democratic actor and civil society animator

Studies of the Philippine Catholic Church during the transition are numerous.[43] They do recognise the important political outcomes of the Church's opposition to state hegemony. Nevertheless, they scarcely touch upon church *ad intra* and *ad extra* dynamics, and the notion of citizenship building which are decisive lenses by which the Church's contributions to democracy can be viewed. Other analyses such as those presented by Shoesmith[44] and Casper,[45] although helpful in identifying the different strands of actors within the Church, do not substantially connect the Church's interventions with post-authoritarian democracy.

The Philippine Church's changing political role was not merely a result of its reaction against the authoritarian regime that started persecuting its personnel and institutes. State persecution coupled with the Church's ideas about human rights and democracy stemming from the Papal social teaching (from the 1930s) and Vatican II (1960s) (see Chapter Three). Nonetheless, these initiatives to reform the Church were not received uniformly by church actors (the hierarchy and laity either collectively or individually). The CBCP was generally cautious, while AMRSP leadership tended to be more radical in the implementation of Vatican II principles. Within the CBCP itself, bishops were categorised as progressives, moderates, and conservatives (see 3.2.5 in Chapter Three).[46] Tensions between the MSPC bishops and MSPC lay secretariat likewise revealed cracks within the Church buttressed by disparate and at times competing interpretations of church teaching (e.g., hierarchy-centred vs. 'people of God' ecclesiology, salvation of souls vs. total human liberation). These tensions persisted beyond the authoritarian period. Thus the CBCP's disengagement from the Marcos regime was gradual but

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[43] See Kroeger, *Human promotion as an integral dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization*; Giordano, *Awakening to mission*; Kinne, *The Splintered staff*; Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church*; Casper, *Fragile democracies*....; Carroll, 'Forgiving or forgetting?....'

[44] Shoesmith, 'The Church'

[45] Gretchen Casper, 'The Changing politicization of the Philippine Roman Catholic Church, 1972-1988,' *Pilipinas: a journal of Philippine studies*, 13 (Fall 1989), 43-55.

[46] See Youngblood, 'Structural imperialism...,' 35-36.

persistent in that it had to resolve internal contradictions within the organisation. Generally though, its relationship with the authoritarian state evolved from one of cautious adaptation and accommodation in the early years of martial law, to critical collaboration leading to its momentous withdrawal of legitimacy from the incumbent government and conferring it upon the pro-democracy groups and movements. The progressive elements of the Church (e.g., AMRSP and some individual bishops) were quick to distance themselves from the Marcos regime at the inception of martial law and persistently waged their crusade against political tyranny. Many a conservative church leader continued to support the Marcos government, although this wore thin over the years, particularly after the 1983 assassination of former Senator Ninoy Aquino, a rallying symbol of unity for the fragmented opposition.

The Philippine Church, like a good number of transition Churches in Latin America as portrayed by some authors,[47] was a key protagonist in the emergence of democracy, even when some church leaders and members collectively and individually were affected by ideological and ecclesiological competition. The roles the Church played in the transition along with civil society and political movements were similarly reflected in the struggles of many Latin American Churches.

Firstly, the Church gradually committed itself to the withdrawal of moral legitimacy, an important political resource of the authoritarian government. This was done by means of the Church's pastoral pronouncements (e.g., pastoral letters, preaching, statements, etc) and its programmes of action (e.g., political education, protest assemblies, etc). These pronouncements were always consolidated inasmuch as a few bishops and other church leaders continued their support for Marcos. The CBCP snap polls statement on the February 14, 1986 assailing the government for retaining power without a moral basis represented probably the broadest

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[47] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships and democracy in Latin America*; Keogh, *Church and politics in Latin America*; Swatos, *Religion and democracy in Latin America.*

consensus of the CBCP membership during the authoritarian period. They made sure that their pastoral statement was no imposition of their discernment on the people, but a starting point for people's considered judgment vis-à-vis the authoritarian state. The events leading to the February 1986 revolution were a fine display of hierarchy-laity (church *ad intra*) and church-civil society (church *ad extra*) interaction. A tiny segment of the hierarchy was still supportive of Marcos, but the CBCP February statement was widely supported by civil society forces and the general public.

Secondly, the Church increasingly became involved in human rights issues through its organisations such as NASSA, and TFD, and their call to action and official statements condemning violations of human rights. Persistent harassment and persecution of the Church created a political backlash against the authoritarian state as this adversely affected the people's confidence in the State. Human rights issues, depending on one's ideological biases (e.g., social democrats or national democrats), had a way of differentiating committed church agents in social and political transformation and also of mobilising organised groups to confront the State.

Thirdly, the promotion of BCCs enhanced hierarchy-laity interaction. This increased people's appetite for participation within the Church and emboldened their advocacy to democratise the State and society. Despite the variety of BCCs, in several cases, the progressive BCCs had a significant influence to decentralise the decision-making process of the Church and mainstream the participation of lay people.

Finally, the Church was deeply engaged in the socialisation and mobilisation of its citizenry. The moderate or progressive sectors of the Church formed partnership with the protest movements and organised groups (e.g., FFW, FFF, BBC). The church people, depending on one's ideological proclivity, marched in rallies alongside political groups such as BANDILA or BAYAN. Its partnership with NAMFREL, an electoral movement in the 1984 and 1986 presidential snap polls, proved vital in the protest movement leading up to the events of the

EDSA revolution. In all these roles, church *ad intra* and *ad extra* dynamics inchoately factored in the emergence of a new notion of citizenship that ushered in the restoration of democratic institutions. Given the variety of doctrinal proclivities and ecclesiological differences between and among the hierarchy and laity, consensus building through church ad intra proved not only desirable but an imperative if the Church were to make a contribution to democratic outcomes in Philippine society. The Church's interaction with civil society in terms of animation, mobilisation and creative partnership likewise demonstrated that church *ad extra* was an essential dimension in bringing about democratisation of the State and society. Although church ad intra and ad extra dynamics and practices of citizenship relate to the transition period, the Church pursued these further during the post-authoritarian period.

In the post-authoritarian Philippines, the Church was well placed in society enjoying the highest trust rating compared with national organisations and establishments.[48] PCP II was an historic moment in the life of the Philippine Church in that it further appropriated key themes in Vatican II (e.g., participation of the laity, social justice), affirmed its intent to promote pro-poor pastoral strategy, and envisioned a participatory church through BECs. Despite the continuous process to reform the Church, varying pastoral tendencies and doctrinal cleavages continued to affect its overall influence as a democratic actor. Catholic charismatic movements (e.g., El Shaddai, Couples for Christ) stressed in general personal and spiritual conversion much more social transformation. El Shaddai, in some instances, took political choices that run counter to the position of the hierarchy. Conservative Opus Dei members emphasised strict observance of depoliticised church teaching and reined in the Church's influence in crafting a social legislation (e.g., agrarian reform bill). BECs of varying tendencies (liturgical, developmental and liberational) struggled to make the Church participatory and responsive to issues at the local level.

[48] Mangahas, 'Who's afraid of the Catholic Church?' 1-2.

By and large the Church stood by the Aquino government, despite the criticism of the latter's failure to implement the centrepiece social reform agenda (land reform) of the regime and its drift to accommodate military interests. The Church supported the 1987 Charter because the Aquino government needed legitimacy and the Constitution was deemed the bedrock of Philippine democracy. Nonetheless, some of its constitutional provisions were diluted when turned into laws (e.g., agrarian reform bill) by a largely conservative Congress. It further defended the Aquino administration during a string of attempted military coups that nearly toppled the government. It was involved in brokering peace between the government and the NDF, and to some extent between the government and the MNLF. In the wake of the failed military coups that threatened the fragile Aquino government, the CBCP came up with a 10-point agenda for peace in its statement 'Seek peace, pursue it.'[49] The Church relentlessly pressed the government and the NDF to return to the negotiating table. The Philippine Church, like the Guatemalan and El Salvadoran Churches, and those which were engaged in brokering the national accords and dialogues, rightly fits Klaiber's idea that the Church was not merely a neutral player but 'a protagonist with its own agenda.'[50] Its ambivalent position regarding the all-out military approach against the insurgency movement, and the use of the vigilante movement for counter-insurgency campaigns were counterproductive to its peace building efforts. Nevertheless, time and again, when peace talks between the government and the NDF collapsed (whether it be during the Aquino, Ramos or Estrada administration), church leaders engaged both parties to return to peace negotiations. The CBCP along with the BUF launched peace campaigns for peace in Mindanao by promoting Christian-Muslim dialogue.

Aside from peace issues, the Church was actively involved in electoral reforms through PPCRV, VOTE-CARE and other church-based electoral organisations. The Church through PPCRV and VOTE-CARE formed partnership with NAMFREL, despite tensions among the

[49] CBCP, *Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines....*' 218-227.

electoral watchdogs. The Church in the local and national electoral exercises proved an important institution that sought to restore public confidence in the electoral system. PPCRV and VOTE-CARE volunteers reviewed the voters' list, conducted poll watching, voters assistance, and took to task NAMFREL's OQC. Voters' political education pressed home the importance of the electoral exercise, presented guidelines for the voting public (e.g., voting on the basis of political programmes and not on personal popularity or patronage politics), and analysed the qualities of a good public servant. Nonetheless, political education, a potential area for citizenship building, was not sustained beyond the election period. Perceived or actual partisan tendencies of some church leaders by openly endorsing political candidates militated against the credibility of the Church as a non-partisan organisation in electoral politics and created division within the Church.

In the Charter change campaigns during the time of Ramos (Cha-cha) and that of Estrada (CONCORD), the CBCP, AMRSP and various church organisations defended the 1987 Constitution as they feared amendments would curtail its democratic character. In both cases, much of the hierarchical leadership and the laity denounced the Charter change campaigns through their statements and protest activities often in partnership with the civil society formations from the Left to the Right of the political spectrum. Both anti-Charter change campaigns unified deeply divided political actors from differing ideological persuasions, albeit for a short while.

The Church's involvement in the impeachment and ouster of President Estrada in People Power II was an attempt to press home the importance of good governance and public accountability. The issue was no longer authoritarianism or state repression, but the lack of transparency of public officials and the prevalence of corruption that eroded the credibility of the Presidency and democratic institutions. The Church was the first national organisation to call for

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[50] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America*, 265.

the resignation of Estrada, although an earlier clamour by Akbayan! was made while it was then considering its options. The Archdiocese of Manila through Cardinal Sin was the first local church to make the pronouncement, and then the CBCP-NASSA, ARMSP, and Catholic educational institutes followed suit. It is important to note, however, that the CBCP as a body did not issue a collective statement as the bishops were divided about withdrawal of support from the Estrada administration. Some bishops and priests continued their support to Estrada throughout the impeachment process that was poised in favour of Estrada's acquittal. It was a complex event betraying class divides in the mobilisation and counter-mobilisation of organised groups. Civil society was deeply divided between pro-Estrada urban poor organisations and anti-Estrada groups generally coming from a middle class background. In Manila KOMPIL II, BAYAN, Sanlakas, and other forces from the military establishment joined the protest movement which had tremendous backing from the Archdiocese of Manila, the CBCP. Many dioceses throughout the country held their own protest assemblies and prayer rallies, mobilised their people, and joined forces with civil society organisations from the Left to the Right. When Estrada's acquittal seemed inevitable, Cardinal Sin, as in the days of People Power I, signalled a protest-prayer assembly at the Shrine of Our Lady along EDSA. This sparked the beginning of People Power II leading to Estrada's departure from the seat of power within 4 days.

Although some analysts doubt that People Power II was a victory for constitutional democracy,[51] weak political institutions in developing countries such as the Philippines needed to be challenged and reformed by the citizenry. The huge level of public confidence in the presidency of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (i.e., 61% approval rate as opposed to Estrada's –12% trust rating) a couple of weeks after she assumed office indicates that the people overwhelmingly endorsed People Power II, notwithstanding some significant support for Estrada from the poor.[52]

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[51] Mydans, 'People power 2..., 1; Spaeth, 'Oops, we did it again..., 29; Schaffer, 'Clean elections and the "great unwashed",....'

[52] ABS-CBN/SWS, 'Survey on people power 2 and the change in the presidency,' 50.

Contrary to the criticisms of some observers of Philippine politics,[53] the rule of law prevailed when the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the Macapagal-Arroyo administration was legal and legitimate.[54] In addition, 'people power' is enshrined in the 1987 Constitution (e.g., institutionalisation of NGOs/POs, mechanism for direct democracy), the pillar of Philippine democracy.[55] In the Philippine constitution, the State being 'democratic and republican,' allows some option for direct democracy.[56] In some critical moments when all existing institutional processes have been exhausted, organised participation of the citizenry to correct the inadequacies of these institutions is crucial. Nevertheless, during the 'People Power III' uprising, the fragility of Philippine democracy resurfaced. Despite the years of democracy, evidently there were limits to democratisation. Philippine democracy for one has not addressed sufficiently the question of class relations. A vibrant civil society implicit in a pluralistic view of democracy (such as Diamond's definition) has certain inherent limitations. Surely there must be much more about democratisation than the exercise of 'people power'.

The post-authoritarian Philippine Church maintained its moral influence in the public sphere. Unlike many Latin American Churches whose leaders were replaced by conservatives and a few moderates, which caused acute internal divisions, the Philippine Church in general remained politically active. The Diocese of Bacolod, despite internal rifts, struggled to be politically involved. Further, the Philippine Church still had the same key leaders (e.g., Cardinal Sin) and church organisations (e.g., CBCP, NASSA, AMRSP) that struggled against the Marcos regime. The CBCP continued its line of engagement with the State and society. The Church as a whole not only had to come to grips with the democratic context, it also had to respond to the challenges raised by the INC, fundamentalist groups, and El Shaddai. The hierarchy's

[53] Mydans, 'People power 2...; Spaeth, 'Oops, we did it again...;
[54] Yamsuan, 'It's 13-0 for Gloria....'
[55] *The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines*, 1; see also Bernas, '"People power" in the charter,' 8.
[56] Ibid.

relationship with El Shaddai at times betrayed a flawed church *ad intra* interaction despite the presence of clerics as spiritual directors.

The Church's roles in post-authoritarian Philippines include its 1) support for the 1987 democratic Constitution, 2) defence for the fragile government against the military rebels during the time of coups, 3) sustained advocacy for peace and human rights, 4) active protest against Charter change campaigns, 5) electoral reform involvement, and 5) mobilisation during the Estrada crisis. Despite its own ambivalent positions (e.g., case of the vigilantes, total-war approach) and limitations in its interventions (e.g., unsustained political education beyond the elections, partisan campaigns for certain political candidates), the Church interventions generally made decisive contributions to democracy building. These interventions enhanced the building blocs of democratisation (see Chapter One): the primacy of law (e.g., support and defence of the 1987 Charter, anti-Charter change campaigns), democratic institutions (e.g., peace education and advocacy, human rights), interest articulation and representation (e.g., peace agenda, agrarian reform), democratic culture (e.g., political education during the election period, protest assemblies), and promotion of good governance and public accountability (e.g., the ouster of President Estrada). These interventions find their focus in citizenship, a far cry from patronage politics that typically weakens democratisation. Citizenship in this way consisted of state-imputed rights and 'institutionally embedded social practices' arising individually and collectively from political identities.[57] These experiences had a way of strengthening citizenship which was a result of the struggles in the transition period. Citizenship meant a status and active engagement. In all these interventions, the church displayed its *ad intra* and *ad extra* dynamics, making it plain that unless the laity participates and unless it forms meaningful partnership with civil society, its avowed political outcomes are difficult to achieve. Church-laity interaction and church-civil society nexus were inchoately conceived during the transition period, and became

[57] Somers, 'Citizenship and the place of the public sphere...' 587.

more fully expressed and practiced in the post-authoritarian period. These realities in the macro Philippine Church are reflected to some degree in the local Churches under study. In many areas, the latter also provide some unique characteristics.

7.3 The Diocese of Malaybalay and the Diocese of Bacolod: tales of local democratic feats and failures

The Dioceses of Malaybalay and Bacolod (see Chapters V and VI) by no means represent the entire Philippine Church. These cases illustrate the complexity of the Philippine Church at the local level. These local cases also interact with the national church leadership, civil society and to some extent with the Vatican leadership in Rome. They shed light on the experiences of the macro Philippine Church while making their own specificities. Like the Philippine Church, their experiences can be crystallised in three main lessons. These lessons invite further verification or challenge in future studies.

First lesson: positive hierarchy-laity interaction (church ad intra) enhances the internal mechanism of participation and encourages productive leadership-membership linkage, thereby increasing the Church's potential as an actor in democracy building.

As was consistently demonstrated in the thesis, the hierarchy and laity, whether in global, national or local scenarios, had a variety of actors (individual or collective) whose pastoral strategies and political inclinations were shaped to a large extent by a number of factors: religious ideas and doctrines, class identification, and ideological proclivities. In both the Diocese of Malaybalay and Bacolod, these differences, at times expressed in contestations with regard to the extent of the local Churches' public role, property rights and peace issues (more peculiar to Bacolod), affected their political outcomes. BECs, although generally sanguine to lay participation, were likewise differentiated according to their theological and pastoral leanings (e.g., liturgical, developmental and liberational). Given these disparities then, positive church ad intra was crucially vital as it consolidated the local Church's position.

Evidently, church *ad intra* in the Diocese of Bacolod was a lot more complex than in the Diocese of Malaybalay. The internal divisions that hit the Diocese of Bacolod, following the appointment of Bp. Gregorio, were a severe blow to the hierarchy-laity interaction, a parallel situation of some of the local Churches in Latin America following the appointment of conservative bishops. Nevertheless, it should be noted that some of these appointees (e.g., conservative Archbishop Fresno in Chile) fared well as mediators between the government and rebel forces; and between opposing groups in society.[58]

The rifts in the Diocese of Bacolod were multidimensional in that they affected various major organs of the diocese, and were not simply a tiff between the hierarchy and the laity. To say, however, that the leadership change from Fortich to Gregorio alone caused the internal conflicts oversimplifies the entire story. A number of factors brought about the divisions within the local Church. First, the ascendancy of President Aquino to power elicited mixed attitudes from church activists and organisations with regard to the democratic government. Second, the split and decline within the underground Left movement that had some influence on church organisations weakened the BCC/BECs and civil society organisations. Third, the rise of LOMAS particularly its renewal and charismatic organisations as a reaction to the threat posed by the Christian fundamentalist groups led to an intense rivalry with the BCCs/BECs. Many of these influential charismatic organisations were typically rich and middle class Negrenses that wanted to have a place in the local Church. With Bp. Gregorio's close association with rich landowners (e.g., Eduardo Cojuangco), the conflict within the Diocese of Bacolod became a class contestation: Fortich and BECs epitomising the organised poor, and Gregorio and renewal communities symbolising the rich.

These developments severely affected the life and activity of the local Church in Bacolod. The rifts were gradual but sharply divisive, affecting adversely the local Church's

[58] Klaiber, *The Church, dictatorships, and democracy in Latin America*, 14.

capacity and influence as a democratic actor. The quality of participation in the Church and in public affairs was muddled by internal ecclesial disputes. These disputes surfaced most significantly in the Church's handling of the evacuees in the wake of military operations in 1989, the Diocesan Pastoral Congress convened to appropriate and implement PCP II's ecclesiological vision to become a Church of the poor, the second anti-charter change, the anti-VFA campaign and protest movement during the Estrada crisis. The internal rifts were also visible in the day-to-day affairs of church governance such as in the Presbyteral Council meetings and bishop-priests relationship.

Despite these rifts, the Diocese of Bacolod did not completely recede from political involvement. The first reason explaining this phenomenon is that some programmes that were set up during the time of Fortich continued to exert some influence in the diocese. These included the BCC/BECs, although these did not enjoy as much support during Gregorio's time; the Social Action Center until some of its programmes were terminated in 1993; the Legal Aid Office until its closure in 1999, and the PPCRV which was originally an offshoot of church-backed NAMFREL. The second reason is the persistence of the civil society movement whose influential figures were, in one form or another, connected with church organisations in the pre-Gregorio days. The third reason is that a few key clergy leaders sympathetic to the pastoral thrust laid out by Fortich continued to occupy influential ecclesial positions (e.g., SAC Director, BEC Coordinator) in the diocese even during the time of Gregorio. Finally, the leadership of the Philippine Church (e.g., the CBCP and to some extent Cardinal Sin) was unremitting in their involvement in issues affecting democracy. The leadership provided some guidance support as regards the local Church's mode of engagement. This was particularly true during the national and local elections, the peace campaigns, the first Charter change, and to some extent, the advocacy during the Estrada crisis.

By contrast, the Diocese of Malaybalay did not have to endure a major church *ad intra* crisis. In the post-Claver period, the formation of BECs, lay empowerment, and commitment to justice issues remained top pastoral priorities of the diocese. There was no intense competition between the BECs and the renewal or charismatic groups, at least not in the way that the LOMAS and BCC/BECs had it in Bacolod. The decline of the Left in Bukidnon and its outlying areas did not seem to affect profoundly the capacity of the Church to mobilise on the basis of various democratic issues. The mechanisms of consultation and participation (e.g., meetings at different levels, general pastoral assemblies, etc.) built into the programme of the diocese continued to operate in the post-authoritarian era. These mechanisms of participation had a way of ironing out differences between and among the hierarchy and laity. The two bishops that succeeded Bp. Claver were like-minded and pursued largely the ecclesiological thrust laid out by him. The appointments of Bps. Rosales and Pacana after a progressive bishop seem to be exceptions to the Vatican's sweeping move to rein in the political involvement of local Churches.[59]

Thus positive church *ad intra* influenced the political outcome of the local Churches' involvement in democracy building. The finest moments of church *ad intra* in both cases were displayed when the BCC/BECs, with the support of the hierarchy, played significant roles in democracy building. These small Christian communities helped to shape the Tocquevillian civil associations.[60] These small but politicised communities qualify as de Tocqueville's 'great free school' of democracy building in the Church and in society.[61] BCC/BECs fashioned an ethos of participation and engagement in the public sphere where citizenship is exercised. In the Bacolod diocese, the BCC/BECs were involved in the peace zone struggle of Cantomanyog and the

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[59] See Jean Daudelin and W. E. Hewitt, 'Church and politics in Latin America,' *Third World Quarterly* 16(2), (1995), 221-236; Stewart-Gambino, 'Introduction....'
[60] Ireland, 'Popular religions and the building of democracy in Latin America..., 114; see also Putnam, *Making democracy work...*, 89-90.
[61] Foley and Edwards, 'The Paradox of civil society,' 44.

relocation of Sincang Residents. In both cases their campaigns received support from external groups ranging from civil society actors (e.g., PsPN, PEZAN in Cantomanyog) to local politicians (e.g., Sincang relocation), aside from the hierarchical leadership, parishes and church organisations. In both cases, the role of priests as intermediaries (Fr. Nueva in Cantomanyog and Fr. Rito in Sincang) proved pivotal in linking the church leaders and the local communities. In both cases, the hierarchical leadership backed the mobilisation, although in the Cantomanyog experience, Bp. Gregorio remained very cautious about the campaign. Retired bishop Fortich, however, filled in the gap to provide a strong hierarchical backing. The participation of BCC/BECs in the various mobilisations addressing the 1998 electoral issues and the first anti-charter change campaign were concrete manifestations of local community participation making waves at the provincial, regional and national levels.

In Bukidnon, the San Fernando and Wao mobilisations to protect the environment were initiated by the BCC/BECs which were supported by the parish, and later by the diocese and by the bishops from the MSPC and CBCP. The roles played by Fr. Kelly (in San Fernando) and Fr. Almedilla with lay leader Edna Espinosa (in Wao) were vital in the mobilisation not only of their own BCC/BECs but in the entire diocese along with civil society actors. In the case of the installation of QUEMTRAS, the role played by Fr. Tabios likewise was decisive not only for the indigenous peoples (the Manobos) but also as a link person to the diocese and civil society. The presence of these church leaders (priests and lay) and their involvement provided vital linkage between the base communities and the hierarchical leadership. Through them both entities interacted and discerned the best way forward to protect and advance environmental interests. The Bukidnon BECs were also involved in the various democratic issues such as the national and local elections, the two anti-charter change campaigns, and during the impeachment trial of President Estrada. In all these cases, the two bishops (Rosales and Pacana) and the clergy in general gave their full support to the cause. By way of contrast, the MAPALAD advocacy in

Bukidnon betrayed fragile church *ad intra* dynamics with the bishop, a few of the clergy members and lay leaders in support of the farmers' cause while the parish priest and most local lay leaders were on the other side of the struggle. This tension was also reflected, if not exacerbated, on the national scene where various religious groups and Cardinal Sin endorsed the petition of the MAPALAD farmers while NASSA and the CBCP leadership remained silent.

Second lesson: The Church-civil society healthy interaction (church ad extra) along with hierarchy-laity interaction (church ad intra) dynamics widens the avenue of participation and set out a new relationship between Church and civil society organisations which is favourable to democratisation. This positive interaction is expressed in three modes: the Church can mobilise, animate, and create partnership with civil society actors, and vice versa.

Evidently the Philippine Church in the post-authoritarian society did not act alone in building democracy. It was different in the authoritarian period when civil society was emerging, when the Church in many cases spearheaded, led, acted principally and engaged directly the State to wage the democratic struggle. In the post-authoritarian setting, there is much more consciousness on the part of the Church to link up with existing civil society organisations and invite lay people to greater political involvement. In the Diocese of Bacolod, the peace movement was launched with peace advocates and other civil society actors. The advocacy to promote peace zones was supported by some bishops and pressed on President Aquino but it was rejected by the military, by local and national government officials, by the CPP-NPA leadership and by the rebel returnees. In the Diocese of Malaybalay, the environmental movement was likewise sustained by the Church's interaction with environmental groups and other organisations. Although the Church originally took some initiatives (e.g., Wao advocacy in Bukidnon), it was gradually more conscious of the rightful space of civil society agents. In the case of Wao, Bp. Pacana was quite insistent that the civil society organisations take the centrestage in the environmental struggle and that the Church should act as a support group. Such a position fits in well with Vatican II and PCP II's empowerment of the laity. The findings

in both cases seem to suggest a shifting position of the Church vis-à-vis civil society from being an activist to being an animator of civil society.

Partnership with civil society organisations was also evident in the electoral movement particularly in the 1992 and 1998 presidential, congressional, and local elections. Despite the tensions between PPCRV and NAMFREL, both at the national and local levels, the Dioceses of Bacolod and Malaybalay succeeded in forging alliance with NAMFREL. PPCRV had the volunteers, Catholic establishments (notably the schools and parishes), BCC/BECs (except in the 1992 elections when the Bacolod BCCs campaigned for boycott), and electoral education programmes whereas NAMFREL had the resources for a quick count of the electoral results. In both dioceses, this relationship, nevertheless, was ephemeral, that is, it did not go beyond the election period.

With regard to other national issues, the Diocese of Malaybalay consistently positioned itself with civil society protagonists (e.g., PEACE, PARE-Bukidnon) in the two anti-charter change movements and the ouster of President Estrada. In Bukidnon, in the absence of a major internal conflict dividing the diocese, the local Church's relationship with civil society was much more formidable than in the Bacolod diocese. In the former's experience lobbying for environmental protection (e.g., San Fernando and Wao), many environmental groups and civil society organisations stood side by side with the BCC/BECs and church organisations. This was also the case in their advocacy for the rights of the indigenous peoples leading to the installation of QUEMTRAS and SUHITRA. Partnership with civil society was undermined by the internal division within the Diocese of Bacolod, a telling sign that church *ad intra* and *ad extra* are positively correlated. On occasions when it resisted tendencies to curtail democratic gains such as the anti-charter change during the time of Ramos, the church leadership, church institutes, BECs and lay organisations linked up with civil society forces (including the Left) in the biggest protest movement in the province of Negros after the fall of Marcos. Protestant

Churches likewise participated in the event. In several instances, however, not only was the Bacolod Church ambiguous in its stance with regard to national issues (e.g., VFA, anti-CONCORD, and movement to oust President Estrada), it also turned inward handling its internal conflict.

A number of factors explain the synergistic ties between the Church and civil society. First, aside from a strong church *ad intra* component, the presence of influential figures in both parties, whether priests or lay people, facilitated the coming together of these groups. In Malaybalay diocese, Fr. Kelly in San Fernando, Fr. Almedilla with lay leader Espinosa, Fr. M. Estaniel's role in both NAMFREL and PPCRV, and Fr. Tabios in QUEMTRAS installation, Fr. Balansag in PEACE and PARE-Bukidnon, among others, were critical link persons between the hierarchical leadership and the civil society. In Malaybalay, civil society organizations such as NAMFREL, *Lihok*-Wao, PEACE and PARE-Bukidnon had key lay leaders who were central in making church-civil society partnership work. In Bacolod diocese, Fr. Nueva in Cantomanyog, Fr. Rito in Sincang, Fr. Hiponia and Fr. Rito with lay leaders Melocoton and Cabillo, were key leaders that linked the hierarchical leadership and civil society organisations, despite some signs of internal division within the Church. In Bacolod, the presence of peace activists in PsPN, Pax Christi, PEZAN who were also active lay leaders members of CFM (Hagad and Villanueva) factored in the church-civil society synergy.

Second, in both cases, the State agencies such as the judiciary, the local government, and local parties, were not strong enough to operate within the locality thus creating a vacuum in local governance. In the Diocese of Malaybalay, DENR, local law enforcers, many times the regional courts, and political parties were ineffective in curbing illegal logging practices. In the Diocese of Bacolod, issues pertaining to human rights and peace were aggravated or simply not addressed sufficiently by the local and national governments (although at one point, the local government persisted in initiating a 10-day ceasefire which was extended to another 10 days),

judicial courts, and political parties. In the given cases, only the local Church with the support of civil society organisations was in a position to fill in the gaps.

Third, given the weak political institutions, the pressing issues (i.e., environment in Bukidnon, peace in Negros) had a way of closing the divide between the Church and civil society. The two bodies found themselves, as in the transition period, natural allies with shared interest in democratisation. Peace in Negros was an extremely crucial issue considering the scale of military assault (Operation Thunderbolt) and the incidents of violent encounters between the military and the NPA, whereas for Bukidnon the threat of an environmental catastrophe was equally pressing for its inhabitants.

Fourth, many of the civil society actors which emerged from the transition period were either heavily influenced by the Church or were allies of the Church in their struggle for democratisation. Thus there were already existing ties between the two parties that facilitated greater collaboration beyond the authoritarian period. In Bukidnon, groups like TFD, COPE, LTK, *Lihok*-Wao, PEACE, FLAG, NAMFREL, and so many others became partners of the local Church. In the Diocese of Bacolod, TFD, PsPN, PEZAN, PCPR, NAMFREL, NO-ERAP and others engaged in partnership with the Church for the same reason.

Church *ad intra* and *ad extra* dynamics in themselves are certainly not sufficient grounds to explain the local Churches' continued involvement past the authoritarian stage. There are other factors that gave impetus to the Church's role in post-authoritarian democracy building. Firstly, like the Philippine Church including the two local Churches in the study, Vatican II and the Catholic social teaching of the Church (including eco-spirituality) provided the theological and ecclesiological energy for its participation in the public sphere. PCP II, a national reception of Vatican II, likewise fuelled the trajectory of the local Church's public engagement. Whether this engagement was on matters relating to peace or environment, Vatican II, the Catholic social teaching, and PCP II, lent legitimacy and motivation for the Church's persistent involvement.

This is much more visible in the Diocese of Malaybalay than in the Diocese of Bacolod which was then reeling from deep internal divisions. Nevertheless, the appropriation of Vatican II and PCP II remained uneven as evident in the ecclesiological cleavages and at times competing interpretations of the Church's social teaching evident among the groups that became influential. Such tensions were most evident in the Diocese of Bacolod which was experiencing acute ecclesiological and doctrinal divides (e.g., pro-Fortich vs. pro-Gregorio groups, BCCs vs. LOMAS). To some extent, the Church in both cases was not acting primarily to protect its corporate interests, as Gill's rational actor theory suggests for many of the Latin American countries.[62] For Gill, the calculus of costs and benefits is a determinant factor in the hierarchy's response or reaction to issues affecting its interests.[63] Gill equates corporate interests with the hierarchy's as if the laity and lay organisations were secondary elements within the Church. The Church's pastoral thrusts were propelled and motivated to varying degrees by theological principles and renewal set out by the Vatican II, the Catholic social teaching and PCP II. In the absence of this theological base and impetus, current church involvement may have to be recast in other lines of pastoral involvement.

Secondly, both local cases in the transition period were quite engaged in confronting, locally and nationally, the authoritarian regime of Marcos. Both local Churches had progressive bishops to promote the reforms. Both bishops were deeply committed to resist the authoritarian state. Both dioceses were active in the defence of human rights through their respective legal aid offices. Both local Churches fostered the formation of BCC/BECs to mainstream lay participation. Many of the structures and programmes (e.g., consultation mechanism, BCC/BECs, Legal Aid, etc) set up during the transition period are still in place, although some either have changed markedly, declined or ceased altogether. Although in the Diocese of

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[62] Gill, *Rendering unto Caesar....*
[63] Ibid., see also Gill, 'The Struggle to be soul provider...;' Gill, 'The Economics of evangelization.'

Bacolod, the new leadership and emerging contexts (e.g., rise of charismatic movement alongside fundamentalist groups, decline of underground Left, democratic setting) have no doubt reined in its brand of activism, evidently it was not ready to withdraw from the political engagement, unlike some of its local counterparts in Latin America, Central Europe and Africa. The influence of key clergy and lay leaders from the pre-Gregorio years and firmly embedded civil society organisations (e.g., BCCs) are perhaps two significant driving forces that kept the Church's involvement alive.

Thirdly, given the bankruptcy of political parties and institutions as mentioned earlier, inevitably this invites other non-state actors (civil society organisations) to take up the cudgels against non-performing or undemocratic political institutions. The Church and civil society acted when the state agencies (e.g., law enforcers, judiciary) and governing institutions failed. The Church has a vast network locally, nationally and internationally which as Carroll puts it, 'only Coca Cola distributors can rival!'[64] Moreover, the Philippine Church is perhaps, like in many Latin American countries, the most credible organisation which has the social influence, moral energy, and capacity to socialise and mobilise the citizens and engage the State and society. This form of engagement is evident in the case of the peace movement in Negros and the environmental constituency in Bukidnon and in some moments of the national Church's involvement in a wide range of democratic issues.

An issue threatening the church's ad *intra* and *ad extra* positive dynamics centres on active partisan politics such as campaigning, overt or covertly, for particular politicians to elective offices; and its position on personal and sexual morality that is at variance with civil society and public sentiment. The Church's position and its manner of lobbying on some contentious issues such as population control and divorce have been perceived by many writers

[64] Carroll, 'Civil society, the Churches, and the ouster of Erap,' 246.

as potentially divisive and undermining church-state separation.[65] Although these issues have not been prominent in the narratives of the two local Churches, indications of Philippine Church-State differences on these issues, particularly on the government's population policy, have surfaced now and then.[66]

In sum, apart from church *ad intra*, the Church's partnership with civil society (church *ad extra*) expanded the site of participation to include non-church groups in civil society. Engaging civil society recasts the Church's control over the path of democratisation and enabled creative ways of allowing non-church and non-state actors to contribute and play significant roles giving them their rightful domain in the public sphere.

Third lesson: the single most significant contribution of the Church to democracy building is its role as an agent of citizenship formation and advocacy.

Based on the findings presented, engaged citizenship is the Church's most important political inroad in post-authoritarian Philippines in the national sphere and in both local cases. Engagement in citizenship touched upon various fields of interest. In Malaybalay diocese, citizenry awareness and mobilisation included issues linked to human rights, indigenous peoples' rights, 1992 and 1998 electoral participation, defending the democratic constitution, and the campaign for the impeachment, resignation and removal of President Estrada. In Bacolod diocese, citizenship education and movement, apart from peace advocacy, meant commitment to human rights, safeguarding the democratic constitution during the Ramos period, and working for a strong and credible electoral system in 1992 and 1998. If the Malaybalay diocese was a key figure in the creation and consolidation of an environmental constituency, the Bacolod diocese was equally instrumental in the inauguration of a peace contingent.

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[65] Fleet and Smith, *The Catholic Church and democracy in Chile and Peru*; Millard, 'The Influence of the Catholic Hierarchy in Poland; Casanova, *Public religions in the modern world.*

[66] Joaquin G. Bernas, 'Secretary Flavier and Bishop Varela,' *The Manila Chronicle*, 10 August 1993, 5; Songco interview.

The BCC/BECs along with civil society organisations were arguably vital schools of citizenship training and education in both local Churches. This point echoes de Tocqueville's proposition that the art of association, in this case located in the BCC/BECs, is so crucial to citizens' action.[67] The BCC/BECs in Bukidnon were a catalyst in the formation of an environmental constituency, while the Cantomanyog BCC in Negros was instrumental in the creation of a peace movement. In both cases, they became sites of interest articulation and representation of the local communities. A number of related cases have been documented regarding BCCs in the Philippines,[68] but very few have reached national and to some extent international recognition such as the experiences of San Fernando (Bukidnon) and Cantomanyog (Negros Occidental). Local issues were discussed and when necessary elevated to the parish and diocesan levels for wider discussion and action. These BCC/BECs initiatives had the support of the hierarchical leadership and had external linkage with groups in civil society and with local politicians (Bukidnon's case), although the internal division in the Bacolod diocese factored in the decline of BCC activity and influence in the local area. In both campaigns, the notion of being a Christian was linked to being an informed and active citizen who responded to environmental and peace issues. Citizenship did not only mean assertion of individual rights or merely belonging to a group, but the incorporation of the former in collective rights through deliberations as in a civic republican notion of citizenship.[69] Citizenship rights are construed not merely as individual entitlement, but also as a collective stake in a democratic enterprise. Rights too are not simply political, civil, social, cultural and economic but they can be contested in other areas such as peace, development, environment and ancestral domain claims. Rights can be contested by those afflicted with peace, environment issues and ancestral land displacement not only against the State but also against non-state entities (e.g., armed groups, loggers,

[67] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II, 117.
[68] See Mendoza, *et al.*, *Church of the people....*'
[69] Jones and Gaventa, 'Concepts of citizenship...,' 4.

ancestral domain occupants). In so doing, peace and environment constituencies, and indigenous peoples can become shapers of social policy and citizens' participation.

BCCs/BECs in the Diocese of Bacolod, however, are declining and they need to explore various ways of exploiting citizenship as a way of reinforcing fragile democratic institutions. Their boycott in the 1986 and 1992 elections did not serve to advance the cause of democratisation. BCC/BECs in the Diocese of Malaybalay, however, continue to enjoy the support of the incumbent bishop and remain vigorous and dynamic in addressing local issues. In both cases, they need to project a proactive agenda in deepening the process of democratisation apart from reacting to local or national issues. Making the transition from a protest group to active and competent participants in citizenship and democracy building still poses a huge challenge for their potential contributions, if not survival in a democratising setting.

Nonetheless, despite the formation of these informed and active constituencies, it appears unclear whether or not they were able to translate their influence in terms of votes in the local and national elections. Bp. Rosales, although belatedly, did indicate in his pastoral letter before the 1992 elections to consider voting for candidates who, among other things, were committed to protect the environment and not to profit from forest clearing. However, some officials with known sympathies for logging companies were still elected to office. This bespeaks of the Church's limitations in influencing the voting public. Additionally, the lack of post-election follow through on the issues articulated by these constituencies (peace and environment) and electoral promises of elected candidates are weak, if at all visible. In the national arena, this was also PPCRV's and VOTE-CARE's main predicament in post-election scenarios. For many of these cases, inaugurating a citizens' movement on the basis of issues appears to be more workable than sustaining and making it operate on a day-to-day basis. In many instances, citizenship is still basically rights-based, with few indications of competent citizenship.[70]

[70] See Elkin and Soltan, 'Citizen competence and democratic institutions.'

Competence in citizenship requires a fair amount of skills, knowledge, and capacity to make effective interventions. But all this is also dependent on the capability and competence of the State to respond to a citizenry action.

The Church's direct involvement in citizenship formation is a growing interest in democratic and development studies.[71] The study draws attention to an important pathway (engaged citizenship) that civil society in general and the Church in particular can explore more fully in pursuit of democratisation. A few more issues deserve closer investigation as a result of this study: are local Churches involved in promoting local governance? if so, how? are citizens' movements sustainable beyond the issues which gave rise to their existence? how does the Church get involved in citizenship in everyday life beyond rights-based issues? how are local concerns (environment and peace) mainstreamed or translated in electoral votes? how does the notion of citizenship apply to the rights of the indigenous peoples?[72] how does globalisation affect democracy building and the quality of church involvement in democracy?[73]

7.4 Whither the Philippine Church as an actor in democratisation?

Philippine democratisation is ongoing. While its quality of democracy looks weaker compared with other countries in Southeast Asia (e.g., Thailand), its stability has an edge over some countries in the region (e.g., Indonesia).[74] Its democratic impulse appears to be stronger than that of Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam and other countries in the region.[75] But its democratic engagement is far from over.

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[71] See W. E. Hewitt, *Base Christian communities and social change in Brazil* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 84-90; Meacham, 'The Role of the Chilean Catholic Church in the new Chilean democracy,' 285-299; See also Sarah Brooks, 'Catholic activism in the 1990s: new strategies for the neoliberal age,' in *Latin American religion in motion*, eds. Joshua Prokopy and Christian Smith (London: Routledge, 1999), 67-89.

[72] See Stavenhagen, 'Indigenous rights...;' Yashar, 'Contesting citizenship in indigenous movements and democracy in Latin America.'

[73] David Held, *Democracy and the global order: from modern state to cosmopolitan governance* (Stamford, California: Stamford University Press, 1995).

[74] Case, *Politics in Southeast Asia....*'

[75] Ibid. See also Putzel, 'Why has democratization been a weaker impulse in Indonesia and Malaysia than in the Philippines?'

Locating the Church in democratising regimes remains topical and a complex minefield. This study has opened up a window on the church-democracy relationships. The decline of academic interest in the Church as an actor in democratisation from the early 1990s tells of a few possibilities. This may suggest an apparent inertia of the Church in the post-authoritarian period. This may bespeak of changing socio-political and economic circumstances in current times and the Church's own need to redefine its thrusts in the light of new emerging contexts. This may, however, invite observers to re-examine more closely or through other lenses the Church's roles in post-authoritarian democratisation and bring the Churches back into the newly found democratic space. This study took on board these possibilities, but focused its treatment on the last one.

The lessons of this study have a bearing not only for the Church but also for other key political actors within civil society. Church *ad intra* is an imperative within the Church (local, national and global) inasmuch as ecclesiological and doctrinal divides prevail despite decades of reforms since Vatican II. The Church does not exist beyond class, gender and ethnic differences. Additionally, the Church is not simply the hierarchy or the laity as if both were mutually exclusive. Positive and constant intercommunication within and between the two parties increases the prospects of building consensus and reduces internal contradictions. Likewise, the Church must continually re-engage civil society organisations to increase its mobilisational and associational capabilities. While it has been sufficiently established that the Church has a capacity and influence to initiate citizenship, sustaining and making it competent remains a big challenge. The issues raised are equally pertinent for civil society actors. These actors need to review their relationship with the Church in post-authoritarian setting. Lessons derived from the church's *ad intra* and *ad extra* linkages and its engagement with citizenship building in post-authoritarian democracy likewise have a bearing on civil society organisations particularly in places where church presence is particularly pervasive. These organisations need to exploit their

own *ad intra* and *ad extra* components in strengthening citizenship. The possibilities for the Church and civil society are immense. The Church alongside civil society may continue the lines of its public engagement during the authoritarian period and face anachronistic activism. They could likewise be eclipsed from public affairs and let the political institutions and parties take over, but forfeit a decisive role of cultivating de Tocqueville's 'habits of the heart' along the path of engaged citizenship. Still, the search for innovative and creative roles for the Church and civil society in a democratising context must be pursued. But for now, the evidence from the Philippine Church suggests that it is not yet ready to sing its swan song as a democratic protagonist despite its own fair share of undemocratic tendencies, by impulse or by intent.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Open and semi-focused interview guide questions

1. When and how did your local (or national) church begin its involvement in social and political issues? Who were the people involved?

2. How would you assess the relationship of the church leaders and lay people? What were the mechanisms of decision-making in the diocese? What is the leadership style of your bishop? How would you describe the transition from the previous bishop to the present?

3. Was your diocese (or the national church) involved in strengthening democracy after 1986? What programmes and activities dealt with democratic issues? Did they effectively strengthen democracy? In what ways? What factors contributed to or militated against democracy building?

4. Evaluate the diocese's (or the national church's) involvement in democracy building after 1986. What are some of its strengths and weakness? What explains the nature of its involvement

5. Describe the past and present state of BECs in your diocese? How many members in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and currently? How did the bishop interact with BECs? What is the structure of decision-making in these BECs?

6. Was your diocese (or the national church) involved in the elections of 1992 and 1998? What activities were initiated and/or participated by the diocese? Who were principally involved? How? What is your assessment of the church's involvement? Was there any follow up of the church's involvement in electoral politics?

7. What there any partnership between the church and civil society in view of democracy building? Who initiates in joint programmes and activities of the church and civil society? How would you assess your civil society movement in your diocese (or the national church)? How would you evaluate the church-civil society relations in your diocese (or in the country)? What factors explain the relationship between the church and civil society?

8. Describe your legal aid office. What is the history of your legal aid office? Who were the people involved? What were the programmes in your office? How did these strength democracy? Was your church engaged in human rights issues in the diocese (or in the country)? To what extent was the church a vital actor in the defence of human rights?

9. What was your diocese's participation in national issues appertaining to democracy during the time of President Corazon Aquino, President Fidel Ramos and President Joseph Estrada? How was the local church involved in these issues? What was the political outcome, local or national, of the church's involvement?

Appendix 2: Declaration concerning the establishment of a zone for peace

Pamat-ud sa pagtukod sang isa ka sona sang paghidaet
26 Disyembre 1989

I DEKLARASYON

Kami nga mga pamuloyo, bilang mga sibilyan sang Sitio Cantomanyog, Barangay Haba, Candoni, Negros Occidental nagapamatuod nga ang amon lugar/ginapuy-an mangin isa ka SONA SANG PAGHIDAET. Isa ka bagay ang amon ginasigahum sining pagpamat-ud:

LIKAWAN/TAPNA-ON ANG PAG-ILINAWAY SA AMON DU-OG SA TUNGA SA GAHUM MILITAR SANG CPP/NPA KAG PC/AFP KAG IBAN PA NGA MGA GRUPO. Ining pagpamat-ud nagakahulugan nga wala sang armas nga makamalatay, ilabi na gid ang nagalupok, sa sulod sining SONA SANG PAGHIDAET.

II KATUYU-AN

Ang amon katuyu-an amo ang pagluntad sang matu-od nga paghidaet nga nasandig sa pagkamag-ululutod, paghangpanay kag pagtahud sa kinamatarung/dignidad sang tawo nga gintuga sang Dios sa Iya larawan. Luyag namon nga magluntad ang katawhay kag kalinong agud nga mapa-uswag namon ang amon pangabuhi kag palangabuhi-an. Ang pagluntad sang katawhay isa ka kondisyon sa pag-away namon sang KA-IMULON KAG INHUSTISYA. Sa malip-ot nga pulong, amon ginahandum ang paghidait kauswagan sang katawhan nga napasad sa hustisya.

III KONDISYON

1. Ang amon du-og bukas maskin kay sin-o man nga may maayo sang kabubut-on.

2. Luyag namon nga kami mahilway sa mga armas sang kamatayon ilabi na gid sang nagalupok, gani ang sin-o man nga magsulod sa sining SONA, dapat nga wala sang dala nga armas, NPA man ukon AFP, ukon CVOs.

3. Bukas kami sa mga grupo magmonitor sang mga hitabo ukon mga paglapas sa sining sadsaran.

4. Nagapangabay kag naga-apilar kami sa mga naga-ilinaway nga mga grupo nga respetahon ining amon pagpamat-ud.

IV MGA PAAGI SA PAG-IMPLEMENTAR SINING MGA PAMAT-UD

1. Ini nga pamat-ud ginapahibalo namon sa natungdan nga mga grupo sa pagkuha sang ila man nga pamat-ud.

2. Ipahibalo sa tanan nila nga mga units sa diin ining SONA napatungud agud respetahon ini.

3. Ipahibalo man ini sa tanan nga mga opisyales kag ahensiya sang gobyerno nga may angut sa sitio (barangay officials, Sangguniang Bayan, Sangguniang Panlalawigan, Congresswomen, Health, etc).

4. Tukuron ang ehekutibo nga komitiba nga ginakatapu-an sang lima ka representante nga pumuluyo sa Cantomanyog. Nga amo ang nagapatuman sang pamat-ud kag mga sadsaran.

Ining ginbalay nga mga kaundan indi perpecto. Kada bulan sarang ini review-on. Sono sa makasugtan sarang ini madugangan.

English Translation of Cantomanyog declaration[1]

Declaration concerning the establishment of a zone for peace.
26 December 1989

I DECLARATION

We, the residents as civilians of Sitio Cantomanyog, Barangay Haba, Candoni, Negros Occidental, affirm that our place is a ZONE OF PEACE. This is made effective upon its declaration:

AVOID/STOP THE FIGHTING IN OUR PLACE BETWEEN THE MILITARY FORCE AND CPP/NPA AND PC/AFP AND OTHER (ARMED) GROUPS. This declaration means that there will be no arms those that kill, especially firearms within the ZONE OF PEACE.

II AIM

We want peace that will prevail based on brotherhood/sisterhood, mutual understanding and respect for rights/dignity of person as created by God in God's image. We desire peace and quiet that will last so that we can develop our lives and livelihood. The prevalence of peace is a necessary condition if we are going to confront poverty AND INJUSTICE. In short, we desire to have peace, prosperity of people based on justice.

III CONDITIONS

1. Our place is open to whoever has goodwill.

2. We desire that we be free from arms that kill, especially firearms, and therefore anyone who wants to enter this ZONE should not bring in fire arms, NPA or AFP or CVOs.

[1] Translated by Antonio Moreno with the assistance of Fr. Niall O'Brien.

3. We are open to groups that monitor the events or violations of the covenant.

4. We wish and appeal to warring groups to respect our declaration.

IV WAYS TO IMPLEMENT THIS DECLARATION

1. This declaration we promulgate to the concerned groups who are making their own declaration.

2. We will inform those whose units belong to this ZONE to respect this.

3. We will inform all the officials and agencies of the government that are connected with the sitio (barangay officials, Sangguniang Bayan [Local Council], Sangguniang Panlalawigan [Provincial Council], Congresswomen, Health, etc.).

4. Set up an executive committee that will be composed of five representatives of the residents of Cantomanyog that will implement the declaration and the agreement.

The contents of this thing are not perfect. Every month this can be reviewed. This can be altered insofar as we have agreed.

Appendix 3: Chronology of Events

Date	Church	Philippine State and society
1891	Papal social encyclical *Rerum Novarum*	
1898		Declaration of Philippine Republic (Independence from Spain)
1931	Papal social encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*	
1945	Creation of Catholic Welfare Organization (CWO), renamed Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines in 1968	
1946		Independence from the United States of America
1955	Creation of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of Men in the Philippines (AMRSMP)	
1957	Creation of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of Women in the Philippines (AMRSWP)	
1962-65	Vatican II	
1966	Creation of National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA)	
1967	Papal social encyclical *Populorum Progressio* National Rural Congress	
1968	Medellin Conference, Columbia	Establishment the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)
1969		Insurgency movement begins
1971	'Justice in the World' document Formation of the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (MSPC)	
1972		Declaration of Martial Law
1973	Creation of Church-Military Liaison Committee (CMLC)	
1974	Task Force Detainees (TFD) was set up	
1976		Tripoli Agreement between the government and Moro National Liberation Front (MLNF)

1981	'Lifting' of martial law	
	Pope John Paul II's visit	
1983	CMLC is dissolved	Assassination of Former Senator Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino Jr.
1984		Batasang Pambansa (National Assembly) election
1985		Founding Congress of *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (New Nationalist Alliance, BAYAN)
1986		
February 7		Snap Presidential elections
February 14	CBCP statement on snap Presidential polls	
February 16		*Tagumpay ng Bayan* (Victory of the People) rally
February 22-25		People Power I; Corazon Aquino becomes President of the Republic (EDSA I)
July 14	Pope John Paul II's letter to the Bishops of the Philippines	
September 15		Peace settlement between the government and the Cordillera People's Liberation Army
December 10		60-day military-NPA ceasefire begins
1987	Reorganisation of NASSA	
February 2		Ratification of the Constitution
May 11		Congressional and local elections
1988	CBCP Pastoral Letter: 'What is happening to our beautiful land'	Formation of Caucus of Development NGO Network (CODE-NGO)
1989		
April		Operation Thunderbolt in Negros
December	Our Lady of Peace mobilisation	Failed military coup
1990	CBCP statement 'Seek peace, pursue it.'	
1990-93		Splits in the Revolutionary Left
1990-2000		'Decade of Peace'
1991	Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP-II)	US Bases agreement expires
	Papal social encyclical *Centisimus Annus*	Ceasefire agreement between the government and MNLF leading to peace settlement

		Local Governance Act
	Creation of Pastoral Parish Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) and Voters' Organization, Training and Education toward Clear, Authentic, Responsible Voting (VOTE-CARE)	Creation of the National Unification Commission (NUC)
1992		Synchronised national and local elections
1994		Initial meeting leading to the creation of the Bishops-Ulama Forum (BUF)
1995	BUF peace campaign in Mindanao	Congressional and local elections
1995-97		Charter change (Cha-cha) campaigns
1997		
September 16	CBCP Pastoral Exhortation: Philippine Politics	
September 21	Cardinal Sin, Former President Aquino led a rally in Rizal Park	National Day of Protests
1998		Synchronised national and local elections
1999	Anti-death penalty campaign	Capital punishment is imposed killing six in the death row
March 9	CBCP-NASSA rejects Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA)	
May 27		Senate ratifies VFA
August 20	Cardinal Sin, Former President Aquino led a rally in Makati; church backs nationwide protests	El Shaddai's birthday party for Mike Velarde turned prayer rally for President Estrada's Constitutional Correction for Development (CONCORD)
September 21	Church backs rallies in Metro Manila, 31 provinces and cities	
2000		
June		Akbayan! calls for resignation of President Estrada
October 2		Jueteng exposé of Governor Singson
October 11	Resign President Estrada Statement of the Cardinal Sin and Archdiocese of Manila	
October 20	CBCP backs Cardinal Sin's statement	

October 29		Formation of *Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino* (KOMPIL II, Congress of Filipino Citizens)
November 4	EDSA Shrine mobilisation	
December 6		Peace deal with *Rebolusyonaryong Partido Manggagawa – Pilipinas* [Revolutionary Party of Workers – Philippines] Revolutionary Proletarian Army – Alex Bongcayao Brigade (RPMP-RPA-ABB)
December 7		Impeachment trial of President Estrada & Jericho March
2001		
January 15-20		People Power II, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is proclaimed President of the Republic (EDSA II)
April-May		'People Power III', Estrada supporters staged rally in EDSA and attempted to assault the Presidential Palace (EDSA III)

Appendix 4: Comparative trust ratings in percentage points

Organisations/Establishments	Trust Margin
Catholic Church	+66
Colleges and Universities	+53
Broadcast Media	+40
Supreme Court	+36
Armed Forces of the Philippines	+35
Print Media	+24
Big Business	+20
Police	+20
Foreign, Private Creditor-Banks	+19
House of Representatives	+17
Senate	+16
CAFGU (Civilian Armed Forces in Geographical Units)	+6
CPP-NPA (Communist Party of the Philippines – New People's Army)	-54

Note: Margin of trust = 'Big Trust' minus 'Little Trust'.
Source: SWS Nationwide Survey, September 1989 in Mangahas 1991, 2

Appendix 5: Violent incidents and deaths during election campaign period, 1965-98

Year	Type of election	Violent incidents	Deaths
1965	President & Congress	69	47
1967	Senate & Provincial	192	78
1969	Senate & Congress	59	52
1971	Senate & Provincial	534	905
1978	Congress	9	N.A
1980	Provincial	180	71
1981	President	178	102
1982	Barangay	N.A.	14
1984	Congress	918	154
1986	President	296	153
1987	Congress	48	50
1988	Provincial	127	98
1989	Barangay	N.A.	30
1992	Synchronised	87	60
1994	Barangay	N.A.	26
1995	Congress	97	73
1997	Barangay	N.A.	4
1998	Synchronised	188	42
Total		2,982	1,959

Notes: Synchronised elections include presidential, congressional and local elections excluding the barangay polls. Barangays are the smallest political units which roughly correspond to an area in a locality.
Source: 'Report of the Commission on Elections to the President and Congress of the Republic of the Philippines, Vol. I (1992), 41, cited in A. B. Villanueva, 'Parties and elections in Philippine politics,' *Contemporary South Asia* 18(2), (September 1996), 175-192; John L. Linantud 'Whither guns, goons, and gold? The decline of factional election violence in the Philippines,' *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 20(3), (December 1998), 301-302.

Glossary of terms

Aggiornamento – the updating of the church identity and mission set out by Vatican II.

Alagad – a community lay leader.

Alay Kapwa (Offering to people) – A Lenten renewal programme in 1974 which stressed the link between faith and social responsibility.

Ang Bandilyo (The Towncrier) – This was a local newsletter of the Diocese of Malaybalay.

Bantay ng Bayan (People's watchdog) – a NAMFREL's electoral watchdog.

Barangay sang Virgen (Virgin of the Barangay) – This is a local devotional Marian organisation based in Negros.

Barrio – a village.

Centesimus Annus (The Hundredth year) - Pope John Paul II's encyclical in 1991 commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* (1891).

Church *ad intra* – refers to the internal interaction between the hierarchy (ordained ministers, that is, bishops, priests and deacons) and laity (non-cleric Catholics).

Church *ad extra* – this is the church's linkage with civil society, at times expressed in church-civil society synergy. This partnership is based on their shared interest in democratisation, ties and mutual confidence.

Comunidades eclesiales de bases (CEBs) - 'Basic Christian Communities (BCCs)' and its later variant Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs). In Cebuano, BCC stands for *Gamay'ng Kristiyanong Katilingban* (GKK) while BEC means *Gamay'ng Simbahanong Katilingban* (GSK). Known in Brazilian Portuguese as *Comunidades eclesiais de base*.

Dagdag-bawas (vote padding and shaving) – This is a scheme of vote rigging whereby votes are added to losing candidate(s) and votes are subtracted from winning candidate(s).

Dignitatis Humanae (Of human dignity) – a Vatican II document entitled 'Declaration on Religious Liberty'

Dumaan – old inhabitant.

Dumagat – lowland migrant.

Et veritas liberabit vos (And the truth shall set you free) – an unsent reaction letter to a Roman letter criticising AMRSP and calling the bishops to assert their authority. This letter was written by progressive Philippine bishops.

Hacenderos – Owners of vast estates (*haciendas*).

Hakot – Herding people with the intention of making them vote illegally.

Gaudium et Spes (Joy and hope) - This Vatican II document is entitled: 'The Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World'

Kapilya (chapel) – At times this term denotes the Christian community.

Katilingbanong pag-ampo – Community worship.

Kristohanong katilingban – Christian community.

Lagay – bribery.

Lumad – Cebuano term for indigenous peoples.

Lihok (Action) -Wao – a protest movement organised through the Social Action Center in Wao.

Manindigan (Fight) – This is a cause-oriented business organisation during the authoritarian period.

Masa – Masses

Opus Dei – a Catholic organisation founded in 1928 by recently canonised Josemaria Escrivá de Balaguer.

Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth) – This Papal Encyclical written by Pope John XXIII in 1963, is also known as 'Encyclical establishing Universal Peace, Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty.

Panimabahon - Community worship of BCCs. BCCs in Mindanao refer to this prayer session as *Katilingbanong Pag-ampo* (community worship).

Poblacion – Town centre.

Politicos – generally refers to politicians.

Populorum Progressio (Progress of the people) - This social encyclical is also known as 'On the Development of Peoples,' written by Pope Paul VI in 1967.

Purok – sub-units in a *barangay*.

Quadragesimo Anno (In the fortieth year) – This is a social encyclical written in 1931 by Pope Pius XI, forty years after *Rerum Novarum*. This encyclical is also known for its title, 'On Reconstruction of the Social Order.

Rerum Novarum (Of new things) – This is the first social encyclical written in 1891 by Pope Leo XIII. The encyclical assumes the title: 'Condition of Labour.'

Sacadas – transient migrant workers.

Salvaging – extra-judicial killing.

Sangguniang Panlalawigan – Provincial Council

Sentro – Centre

Sitio – a barrio sub-unit.

Trapo – a Tagalog slur for traditional politician. *Trapo* also refers to a dirty rag.

Ut omnes unum sint (That they may be one) – a letter written by conservative bishops in response to the letter *Et veritas liberabit vos*.

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